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THE COLONISATION

OF

INDO-CHINA.

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OF

INDO-CHINA

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

J. CHAILLEY-BERT

BY

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PREFACE.

To M. LÉON SAY.

My dear Master,

It is my wish to dedicate this book to you. Those of our friends who are aware how much I am indebted to you and what a great affection I have for you, will consider this token of gratitude on my part as perfectly natural; while maliciously inclined people will, perhaps, find it *piquant* that I should have implicated in colonial politics not only J.-B. Say, who detested them, but his grandson as well, who—at least publicly—has as yet evinced no interest in them. But you will detect in my proceeding, a motive other than artifice, or even gratitude. In it, you will recognise the anxious appeal

of the disciple who seeks the patronage of the Scholar (rather than that of the Statesman) and desires with his co-operation to make a science of colonial politics, if this be possible.

I made my *début* in colonial affairs under the guidance of an admirable intellect. Safe judgment, rapid decision, scientific mind, sound common-sense—such were the rare gifts, so seldom combined, which M. Paul Bert united in one and the same person.

I need not recapitulate what he accomplished in so few short months. His work is in itself a sufficient commendation. In the course of his brief career and on the morrow of his demise he may have had detractors; at the present day he has none but imitators.

He was a strong advocate of a colonial policy. But his idea of a colonial policy was not so much an indefinite territorial extension as a rational plan of administration. After conquest, he desired organisation.

This organisation he conceived and carried out on a scientific basis. He considered it essential for colonial government, that principles should first be established, and a system of procedure adopted.

I have ever since been imbued with these views, at once so simple and so wise: for the future they are my creed. But though

I have met with people who shared these views, few have dared to defend them, and fewer still have desired to put them into practice.

No sooner is the question of colonies broached than we desert those principles, which form the basis of our policy, we lack systematic action, albeit imperious logic has long been our guide. We live from day to day; we wander hap-hazard.

Empiricism is our ruler and guide; and still more so, routine. So that, as a result of mere routine, we have even imported into our transmarine possessions the system of home government, and given to colonies differing very essentially a *régime* which differs in little.

And yet each of these colonies has wants of which the others are ignorant, and all of them have wants which are ignored by the mother country.

Take, for instance, the population of a colony,—a population of colonists and aborigines.

What are colonists? They are natives of a metropolis which with its austere *régime* has offered but meagre chances of success, and who have come to the colonies in the hope of increasing their chances. Will these chances, pray, be increased, if the administrative system, the mania for making regu-

lations, and the zeal for the interests of the public treasury to be found in the mother country are imported into the colonies?

And what are aborigines? They are primitive and suspicious beings who frequently dread even the most justifiable of our innovations, and are rarely in a position to profit by them. Are we going to transfer our European laws and regulations without any modification to peoples such as these?

It is clear, then, that the mother country cannot administer and govern her colonies in accordance with her own system, by her own laws, and her European officials. She must initiate other methods, frame other laws, train up other officials.

Doubtless the parent has her rights which she cannot compromise—still less sacrifice—for the sole benefit of her offspring. Even the most ambitious nation would not colonise at a loss for any length of time. And it seems as though colonisation would be at a loss were the interests of the colonists opposed to those of the mother country.

But such is not the case; their interests, far from being opposed, are identical; and all the rights and interests of the metropolis will be safe-guarded, if care be taken to safe-guard first of all the rights and interests of the colonists.

It has long been supposed that the interests of the mother country are at variance with those of the colonists. It was thought that the former might be impoverished by the very causes which render the latter prosperous: that, for instance, the colonists grow rich on the sale of foreign products to the natives. The mother country instead of calculating what these colonists—her sons—have gained, calculates what her own manufacturers have failed to gain, and pretends that what they have failed to gain is an actual loss to her. This calculation is inaccurate. Whatever the colonists have gained is a gain to their native land.

The interest of the parent, then, lies in not haggling with her children over such matters as may be conducive to their prosperity; that is to say, a certain liberty of action should be accorded them, laws suited to the average of the population; they should have capable and honest officials, and the material means of attaining wealth.

All these are more uncommon than might be supposed.

Look at the laws of our colonies: they are laws which have been almost entirely modelled on the Home Legislature. They consist partly of the Civil Code, the Code of Procedure, the Commercial Code, the Penal Code—and a host of our admini-

strative laws. In Algeria, in Indo-China, in Guiana, in Réunion, we find almost everywhere the same laws, and the same administration.

And the officials? what are they, and whence do they come? In every ten of our colonial officials there is hardly one who may be safely regarded as trustworthy. How will the remaining nine set about the work of governing? The answer is on every one's lips. They will bring with them that passion for uniformity, that mania for routine, that love for making regulations and of form, that dread of initiative, and of the responsibilities which crush the mother country as well as the most vigorous of our colonies.

Consult the Annual Reports for the colonies. You will find there double and treble the number of officials that ought to be tolerated by even the most scribbling of administrations. Enormous sums are devoted to the maintenance of an oppressive staff, whilst a miserable allowance is made for the only real objects of interest and usefulness.

Examine the budgets: nine times out of ten the establishment charges are heavier than the cost of the Public Works themselves. And yet Public Works represent the future welfare of the colonies; they are a safety-valve and a means of subsistence for

to-day, a triumph for to-morrow. Nay, more; they even constitute in the eyes of the natives the sole excuse for colonisation. For the natives care nothing for our laws; they scorn our officials; they dread our reforms. Perhaps more than a century may elapse before we shall score a victory for morals, at the expense of a host of imported vices. What, then, will the present—or may be the next—generation of the vanquished owe us, or for what will they have to thank us, if we deny them altogether, or make them but a niggardly concession of, ports, roads, hospitals, schools,—in a word, all the opportunities of progress?

None of these do our colonies possess. And so almost all of them remain weak and inactive; and, as a logical result, seeing them just as we have made them, we fear to abandon them to themselves. We deny them all initiative, and all liberty. We keep them continually in leading-strings. The more they increase in number and the longer we have them, the harder becomes our task and the less efficacious our supervision; and we finally get to dislike them, because they weary and disquiet us.

Oh! if Parliament to-morrow totally refused its sanction to the colonial budget; if the Government, tired of war, withdrew its forces; if the Mother Country said to her

daughters: "I cry you quits of all I have spent on you; I will even make you a present of whatever you have that belongs to me. I will still undertake your defence from external foes. But for the future, not a penny of mine shall I give you and you will have to provide for yourselves." Oh! how sweet this severity would be, how beneficent this cruelty! Would not this thunderbolt be a stroke of good fortune!

The first days, the first years would see many trials, many follies, much squandering, much ruin. But little by little orderly and energetic folk would gain the upper hand. And what wonders would be accomplished in a short space of time!

There is not a single colony possessed of sufficient security which could not obtain a loan at a reasonable rate of interest. It would provide itself with 'plant,' would indeed construct harbours, railroads, aqueducts, hospitals, sanatoria; a spark of life would be infused into it. It would abolish the excessive import duty which now crushes it, and would allow ingress to all the products of the world at a moderate tariff. It would found a college, at which examinations for the recruiting of its officials would be held; of these there would be few, but they would be well paid. It would pack away back to Europe all that administrative apparatus, all

that legislative trash which are now stifling its progress coupled with our codes, our procedure, and our ministerial officials. It would borrow from young and vigorous countries laws to meet all its various needs. And under such a *régime* our colonies would one and all become prosperous.

They would take their place in the world like new Frances, which would diffuse the influence of the old country in all latitudes. And if some hundreds of years hence one or other of them should grow sufficiently big to have no farther need of our gifts or our aid; if it should offer to repay us the outlay of past years and to send us back our soldiers, so as to be independent till, some day, its surplus population overflowed into some other new country, this would be still another blessing.

For the great aim is not, to have colonies that are languishing, and a vast empire which is in jeopardy; but to have disseminated one's ideas through the world and to have left heirs of one's genius. England's most glorious colony is still—the United States.

If our colonies freed from our paralysing tutelage were some day to become populous and wealthy; if, at some future time, they rose from being colonies to the dignity of nations; if these nations, daughters of our own, were

to perpetuate our renown under other skies and in other ages, colonies would then seem to the world a marvellous means of rejuvenescence, the most powerful—and only—foe of decay and death, and there is no nation, but would desire to found them, even at the cost of great sacrifices, to let them take wing when fully fledged, and so launch them on the path of productive liberty.

Such, my dear master, are the ideas—somewhat premature, I admit—that I have wished to place under your patronage.

Why particularly under yours? In the first place, for this reason: that up till now you are not a declared advocate of colonisation, and that your adhesion would be all the more valuable because the less anticipated. And for yet another reason: Economists appear to me with rare exceptions to have gone on the wrong tack in unreservedly condemning colonisation. It ought perhaps to have been condemned in J.-B. Say's time, but scarcely so in that of Stuart Mill, and certainly not in ours. Circumstances—political, economic, and financial—have changed.

And Political Economy, the *science* of observation, must first recognise facts.

That the colonies are now badly managed, is no argument against them; but rather against those that colonise; it is but a fur-

ther incentive to us to discover the rules of the *art* of colonisation.

To launch Political Economy on so productive a course were, methinks, a task worthy of the grandson of J.-B. Say.

Ever affectionately Yours,

JOSEPH CHAILLEY-BERT.

MARCH, 1892.

THE COLONISATION

OF

INDO-CHINA.

BRITISH EXPERIENCE.

INTRODUCTION.

Object of these studies—French Colonial Policy—Reconstitution of our Territory—Reform of our Administration—Necessity of consulting the experience of our rivals—Limit of the profit to be derived therefrom—THE BRITISH AT HONG-KONG—THE BRITISH IN BURMA.

WHEN we consider what are the elements indispensable to the prosperity of colonies, we shall find that they are three in number, namely: good colonists, good laws, and good administrators. A good colonist is a married, or a marriageable man, who is robust and healthy, full of energy and enterprise, gifted with patience, and possessed of some capital. Good laws are laws which are unpretentious, liberal in their spirit, pliant in

their wording, not overloaded with regulations, which do not try to provide for every emergency and which tend neither to hamper the action of the colonists nor to restrict the responsibility of their rulers. Lastly, good administrators are such as have broad-minded ideas and aim high; are gifted with a comprehensive intelligence and right judgment; are jealous of nothing but the welfare of both settlers and the colony, and interpret the laws (also, if need be, amplifying them), in such a manner as to render them a power, and not a constraint, to the community.

I doubt if this ideal—good colonists, good laws, good administrators—is anywhere to be met with; I am sure that it is not to be met with in the French colonies. Our colonists, for the most part bachelors, are in many respects inferior to the average population of the mother country. Our legislation, far too voluminous and changeable, is nevertheless either antiquated or rigid to excess. Our administrators, in spite of what is undertaken by the central administration, are too numerous; recruited at random, promoted by caprice, they are too often wanting in competence and responsibility. Hence we lack at once all those elements previously declared indispensable. And yet France has a superfluity of such elements at home, and

at one time had them in her colonies.

We know too little of her colonial policy under the former *régime;* it has been prejudiced by her European policy. This colonial policy has had one cardinal defect; it has lacked the spirit of continuity. But, so far as it concerns us here, it has from its very origin and throughout a period of two centuries, shown a wisdom in the conception of its plans, and an ingenuity in their execution, never to be surpassed.

It is to the colonial methods adopted under the old form of government that France owed so many magnificent possessions, which, even in the 18th century, made it doubtful which of the two, she or England, would be the great colonising nation. Unfortunately, this marvellous extent of territory, these invaluable colonists; this wisdom which in spite of all was clearly revealed in the King's Councils; such a wealth of property so dearly bought and so slowly acquired—of all this nothing remains ours at the present time. Territory has crumbled to pieces and traditions have become obscured with the overthrow of the monarchy; finally all was lost in the great upheaval of the latter end of the century, and our departed splendour is only shown by the glory of rivals enriched by our spoils.

At the present day, despite so many dis-

asters, we have at length by twenty years of effort succeeded in reconstituting our colonial empire. But now that we wish to turn the same to profitable account, we search in vain for a *modus operandi* and for men to put it into execution. The severed chain of traditions cannot be re-united; the examples of our forefathers, interrupted in their necessary evolution, are no longer a guide to us in our present difficulties; and, in order to commence our education anew, we must take a lesson from foreign nations.

There are many people to whom the admission of our inferiority will appear a sacrilege, just as the notion of raising ourselves from this position by means of study will appear ridiculous. It were folly to listen to them. "I lay equal blame," says Pascal, "on those who are intent on praising man, as on those who are intent on blaming, or amusing him; I can only approve of those who seek knowledge with tears."

However, if we decide to study, let us endeavour to conduct our studies carefully, and let us not exaggerate the profit which may be derived therefrom. Among foreign nations we shall not find laws, regulations or conduct which may be straightway imitated without any modification. There is no nation whose colonial policy is free from even gross mistakes. All countries without

exception have proved themselves improvident, ignorant, unjust; all governments, careless, indifferent, wanting in tact. England herself has, throughout her history, committed monstrous errors. She possesses, however, two good points, by which we may profit. One is an uninterrupted experience of three centuries from which we might after feeling our way gather certain rules of conduct which at the present day can hardly be dispensed with, and the other, a well-founded mistrust of improvised methods, and an appreciation of the fact, the truth of which has been repeatedly proved, that in the conduct of colonial affairs nothing can supply the place of experience, or even of mere study.

That is all, perhaps, that the first colonial power in the world can teach us. Little as it is, let us at least try to understand it aright—a task by no means so easy.

Compared methods, usually so fruitful, are yet fraught with danger; none more so, perhaps, than the compared study of colonial administration. Numerous and complex factors have to be taken into account; the power of the parent and the aptitude of her colonists; the climate and resources of the colony; the character and institutions of the aborigines. England's experience may possibly be of no service to Spain; results obtained in Africa do not serve as a prece-

dent for any course of action in Asia. If, then, we would model our policy from that of foreign nations, let us make a good choice of our masters. These masters will be the Dutch or the English. But the British-Australian colonists cannot teach us anything worth knowing for our Algeria or our Senegal, nor Americans, for Madagascar. If we wish to reap information from the British on matters relating to Africa, let us go to the Cape, or to the African West Coast. If we wish to turn studies to good account for our Indo-Chinese possessions,—and that is our primary aim—Asia is the country we must study, in adjacent latitudes and under similar conditions: for instance, at Hong-Kong, and in Burma.

The history of Hong-Kong will afford us a further proof (if such were needed) of the —now-a-days commonplace—truism that, colonial enterprise requires an inexhaustible store of patience added to a large amount of obstinacy, and even occasionally a stubborn and *naïve* denial of what is commonly called "evidence"; and that, according to the good old English proverb, "where ignorance is bliss, 't is folly to be wise." It will prove to us, moreover, how many mistakes are made even in the best laid plans; how large a portion of man's success is due solely to good fortune; and that, perhaps,

all human wisdom consists, not in trusting to fortune, but in always being in a position to profit by her favours.

Burma, and India too, of which the former is but a province, will furnish us with other lessons.

We might study Burma from more than one point of view.

We might confine ourselves to British Burma, that is to say, the province of India so called prior to 1885; we might analyse the policy pursued there by the British towards the natives; indicate their system of administration; and determine what might appropriately be imitated, or avoided. This would be an instructive, but at the same time an incomplete task, seeing that British Burma, since 1885, has nearly doubled its area which now extends from the sea to the frontiers of China and Siam, and that all the interest appertaining to this enterprise centres in the British relations with their subjects in name but incompletely conquered, those of Upper Burma, and their problematical tributaries called by them Shans, and by us Laotians.

We might also give a description of the Anglo-Burmese hostilities, of the wars of 1824, 1852 and 1885, and of the dismemberments which followed the first two, the total absorption resulting from the last.

This would be, especially as regards the latest period, an interesting addition to the history of intentional provocation and involuntary conquest, with the moral ready to hand of the 'Earthen and Iron pots.'

Finally, we might describe the rivalries of France and England, rivals in Indo-China in the 19th century, as they were in India in the 18th. We could show how, more than 60 years ago England in self-defence seized a part of Burma; how France, following in her wake, coveted by turns Annam, Cambodia, and perhaps Burma itself; neglected grand opportunities; lost splendid advantages; and allowed herself to be distanced in the race. So that out of this Indo-China, which seemed almost wholly within her grasp, she has still scarcely time to retain for herself a legitimate share by acceding to a proposal to fix the boundaries of the respective spheres of influence. This task would indeed be no less interesting, and for it a motto might be borrowed from an equally famous fable: that of 'The Hare and the Tortoise.'

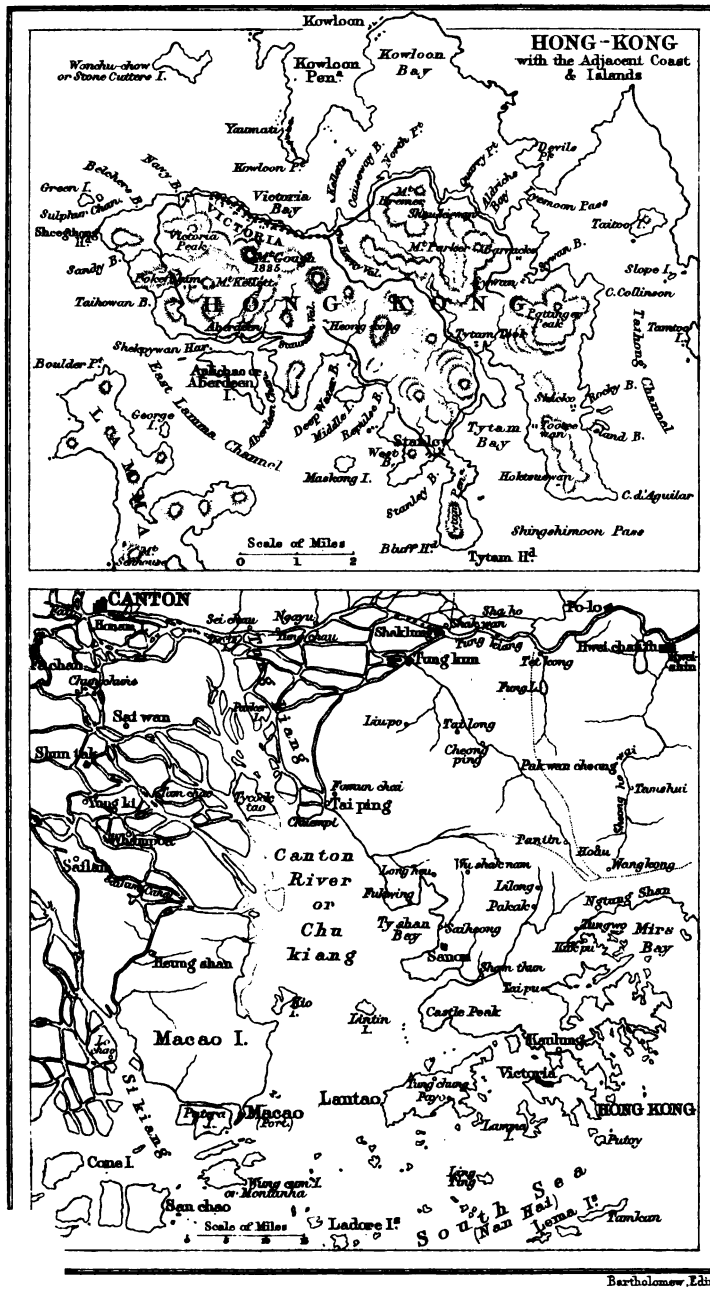
But apart from the fact that all, or nearly all the above has already been done, [1] this

[1] Regarding the triple order of ideas indicated in the text, information may be gathered from the following works:

is not the object of our research. We wish, in drawing a comparison between Burma which belongs to England and that portion of Indo-China which belongs to France, to find out what line of conduct the British have themselves adopted in their new possession, and how, in the midst of difficulties and in the face of wants which are almost identical in the two countries, they have succeeded, not in rendering it prosperous—for that too short a period has yet elapsed—but in preparing its pacification, its administrative organisation, and its economic working.

1. *A narrative of the Mission sent by the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava in 1855*, by Captain Henry Yule, 1 vol., 4to, London, 1858; a work replete with information regarding the geography of Upper Burma, and the history and constitution of the Kingdom of Ava; the author's reputation being world-wide, any encomium on our part would be superfluous.—2. *The British Burma Gazetteer*, a publication issued by the Government of Lower Burma, and containing all requisite information regarding the history, geography, natural history and administrative organisation of that province, 2 vols., 8vo, Rangoon, 1880.—And 3. *La Chute des Allompra ou la fin du royaume d'Ava. (The Downfall of the Alompra, or the End of the Kingdom of Ava,)* the purport of which is sufficiently indicated by the subsidiary title: "Extract from a work in the press, entitled *La France et l'Angleterre dans l'Indo-Chine,*" 1 vol., 8vo, Paris, 1890; Challamel.

THE BRITISH AT HONG-KONG.



Bartholomew, Edin.

CHAPTER I.

The Island—The Harbour—The Town—The Panorama.

HONG-KONG, universally renowned, ornament of the China Seas, wonder and joy of the Far-East, a place of rest and of refuge midway between Singapore and Shanghai, of which two places it forms the connecting link, is a diminutive island situated on the South-West coast of China in 111° 40′ E. longitude (Paris) and 22° N. latitude, just at the entrance to the Bay into which flows the river Canton. Facing it, 40 miles away, lies Macao, a Portuguese settlement. The two settlements stand erect like sentinels placed there by Europe to keep a watch over the Chinese colossus. There is, however, this difference between the two that, whereas the one is feeble and inattentive and dates back 400 years, the other is vigorous and alert, and is hardly half a century old.

It was in 1841, at the time of the Opium

war, that Hong-Kong became British territory. The provisonal terms, however, drawn up between Captain Elliot R.N. and the Chinese Imperial Commissioner Keshin, merely granted the use of the island to Great Britain, and contained special reservations with regard to the high ground. In the definitive Treaty of Nankin, signed on the 29th August 1842, these reservations disappeared, and the island was ceded perpetually to her Britannic Majesty, and her heirs and successors. On the 5th April 1843, it was created a colony and was granted a Charter which we shall discuss in a subsequent chapter. In 1860, at the close of the Anglo-French expedition, the British acquired, by the terms of the Treaty of Pekin (24th October), an additional portion of territory, namely, the Kowloon Peninsula, which projects from the mainland at a point almost opposite the centre of the island. It was at this period that the colony in its present form was constituted.

The additional territory acquired by the Treaty of Pekin was an indispensable adjunct. To it must be attributed the vast extension of the trade—especially the maritime trade—of Hong-Kong, and from it the harbour derived its formation, convenience and security.

Hong-Kong without Kowloon had in fact two defects.

In the first place it was too near for safety to a country which made pirates welcome.

The distance from the island to the mainland confronting it, does not at any point exceed six miles; at certain points at the extreme end of the Kowloon Peninsula it is only two and a half miles, and at the Lyemoon Pass on the north-east, scarcely one mile. This being so, there is a continual crossing to and fro, for which even the most miserable apology for a craft suffices. Now the province of Quang-Tung is inhabited by a population of the worst description. Bandits, pirates, deserters, all sorts of vagabonds live there, on the watch for an easy prey or for profitable opportunities. They penetrated into Hong-Kong, achieved their object, and found an immediate and sure refuge on regaining the opposite shore.

The possession of Kowloon, where posts of observation could be established, tended in some measure to render—and, in fact, did render—these expeditions more difficult, as it afforded greater facilities for their prevention.

Nor is this all. Hong-Kong is of small dimensions: it has a length of 11 miles, and a width of 2 to 5 miles; the total area covering 29 square miles. Besides this, the whole neighbourhood, both island and main-

land, is mountainous. The average height of the mountains is considerable, and here and there rise peaks which descend abruptly to the sea-shore. Victoria, the capital of the island, which at the present day has a population of 190,000, lies at the foot of the peak of that name which rises to a height of 1900 feet. The town developed at first—not without difficulty—along the sea-front; the land was, as the English term it, reclaimed; quays were constructed, and quarters, both good and bad, were provided for the requirements of trade, and for the colonists. Then, as business increased, the space was found to be inadequate. Hereupon the inhabitants migrated, and built their nests on higher ground. Trade cannot, however, mount heights. It requires the immediate neighbourhood of a harbour, and flat ground; so it extended to right and left till every available site being appropriated it was compelled to seek other quarters, the result being, that it overstepped the arm of the sea and occupied Kowloon. But even there the level ground available was not all that could be wished. However, what had been done on the island could be repeated there. The sea was in front, the mountain behind: the mountain was cast into the sea, and on the solid foundation thus obtained, quays and docks were built, and even villas

for those who could not live on the heights.

Thus, composed of two sections successively constructed, the colony of Hong-Kong forms a whole of the highest order both as regards utility, and picturesque effect. Let us imagine the arc of a circle with its concave side turned towards the sea, having a span of about 4 kilometres parallel to the equator, and a rise of 1½ kilometres. In the centre of this arc and to right and left of the centre lies the town of Victoria. All along the curve which an invariably calm sea washes, lie the quays with their landing-stages, and in the background leaning against the mountain and forming a dark mass, are the docks, warehouses, offices and hotels. On the west extends the Chinese village with its regular and monotonous appearance, loathsome odours, and deplorable sanitary condition. Still further off a few manufactories indicate growing industrial enterprise. On the east, before the extreme end of the arc is reached, there is a slight projection of the coast line, the right side of which forms a smaller bay inside the larger one: this is Causeway Bay, a natural harbour which has been additionally protected at great cost, and where hundreds and thousands of boats, junks, and sampans seek refuge from the constantly recurring typhoons. At the extreme end of the arc, the coast

bends in a south-easterly direction, forming an angle of nearly 45° with the equator, and finally, 3 kilometres further on, approaches the mainland on the right, thus forming the narrow Lyemoon Pass. Here ends that portion of the island which faces the mainland: the remaining portion, which faces the open sea, though equally picturesque, is of less interest to us.

On the opposite mainland, the coast takes similar but inverse shapes. From Lyemoon Pass it runs from south-east to north-west, parallel to the portion of the island which faces it, and also forms an angle of about 45° with the equator. It continues thus, forming creeks and promontories, and then expands into a circular bay of great breadth and depth bounded on the west by the Kowloon Peninsula just at that part of the island, on the opposite side of the sea, where ends the eastern extremity of the arc described above. The Kowloon Peninsula here detaches itself from the mainland forming a projection several miles in extent, the end of which points precisely towards the centre of the arc.

Thus the harbour of Hong-Kong, enclosed by two concave strips of coast facing each other, protected from the force of the waves, on the east side by the narrowing headlands which form Lyemoon Pass, and on the west

side by the projecting Kowloon Peninsula and in addition being of huge size and able to anchor within it the fleets of the whole world, would afford unequalled security, but for the fact that typhoons, in whose path it lies, neutralize to some extent its advantageous situation.

There are grander sights to be seen in the world, but few more picturesque and graceful than that of Hong-Kong: the entrance to the harbour and the panoramic view from the mountain.

Coming from east or west, you pass by islands, or rather rocks, which are grey and naked, and glitter in the sunshine. It is a desolate region: not a vestige of vegetation, not a trace of human life. The Portuguese have named this group of islands the Ladrones —a name which they well merit: for they have been for centuries, and still are, the resort of pirates and robbers. Gliding between them, the vessel approaches to a point from which Hong-Kong is seen, at no great distance; a greyish mass, standing out in strong relief, though the neighbouring land can yet scarcely be distinguished. Little by little objects can be discerned: masses of verdure here and there on the peaks; a pane of glass glittering on the summit of a pavilion amongst the trees. Suddenly the vessel makes a curve, and the narrow channel dis-

closes a fleet of ships, junks and sampans; the extended curve of quays; the regular line of buildings, and above them, rising on a succession of hill-slopes, the villas in tiers along the zigzags of the mountain roads.

All is life: here cargo is being shipped, there unshipped; the rattle of cranes is heard, followed by their sudden stoppages; the steamers whistle shrilly; the puffing and panting steam-launches dart hither and thither, making numberless trips. These hardy little pieces of mechanism a few years ago managed to cling on to the French ship *Saghalien* which had been run into amidships and nearly cut in two, and towed her into dock.

On reaching a given point just in the middle of the roadstead the order is given, and the anchor falls. The ship is immediately invaded: all around it, crowding along its sides, tossed on the choppy sea, suddenly rising and falling with the waves, without noise or apparent violence, but struggling and labouring to get as near the deck as possible is a crowd of Chinese manœuvring their boats. The sight of them reminds one of Lilliputians climbing Gulliver's knees. They are come to proffer their services to row passengers and their luggage ashore.

The shape of their boats is very queer. The stern is cut off square, while the prow rises abruptly to a narrow curved point.

There are hardly any bulwarks, nothing indeed but a smooth and level deck, in the middle of which lies a great hole, covered over with an awning. This hole serves alike as kitchen, saloon and store-room, into which the passenger, sitting on the deck, for there is no other seat, lets fall his legs. Further aft, rises mast and sail, the latter generally being made out of patched-up remnants of very strong white silk, and on the opposite side hangs a lump of lead, which can be shifted at pleasure, so as to counterbalance the action of the wind. This boat is also used as a dwelling. At Canton there are tens, at Shanghai hundreds, of thousands of families who have no other home. The father gets his living in the harbour, the children, according to their age, either help to sail the boat, or play about noiselessly; the mother stands on the stern and paddles, with her youngest baby on her back, wrapped in a cloth folded cross-wise. At nightfall the boat is anchored at some safe spot, such as Causeway Bay, the awnings are taken down and spread out to form beds, the little wooden or porcelain seats serve as pillows, and commending itself to Heavenly Protection the family goes to sleep.

Here is the quay. No longer do boatmen assail you, but it is now the porters' turn. The hubbub, tumult and uproar are indescribable. In a twinkling your luggage is

landed. Trunks, overcoat, wraps, opera-glasses, travelling-bag, everything has disappeared; they have been seized and carried off. By whom, or whither, you know not.—Keep your eyes open or you won't see them again.—What is to be done? Their number is legion.—Then call a policeman. Though discreet, the police are obliging and energetic. A "*Cipaye*," whom the English persist in calling "*Sepoy*," is near at hand; tall and upright, cleanlily attired and with a certain dignity, with black skin and black costume, and a red turban wound round and round his head, he still obtains over the natives undiminished prestige. At his approach the turmoil subsides; the baggage is got together again; a gang of porters is organised, a leader appointed, and you have before you a responsible man. "Thank you, Sepoy," and off you go.

"A chair, sir? A chair, sir?" The cry comes from two great fellows in blue cotton attire. You are going into town, doubtless you would like to make a tour of the place: here is a kind of sedan-chair. For a small sum, two francs an hour or fifteen francs a day, they will carry you rapidly and smoothly, with undulating motion, and without jolt or jar, to the summit of the Peak, or the farthest end of the town. "A chair, sir?" You decline. "I prefer walking." They are not discouraged. Stop at the hotel;

choose your room, make your ablutions, take a cup of tea or a glass of port, if you will; you are bound to meet them again below; they follow you whithersoever you go. Cross the principal street, Queen's Road, where carriages and jinrikshas are passing to and fro: there they are lying in wait for you.—"A chair, sir?"—"No, I'd rather climb."

Well, climb if you will; the mountain is in front of you. You wend your way along the steep and winding lane with its flights of stone stairs; turning and twisting about, at last you find yourself shut inside a long alley without a vista. Ahead of you the road winds to the right; behind you it winds to the left; on either side a row of houses, cottages standing next to mansions, robbing you of all view of sea or mountain; disheartened, you gaze about you, and languidly proceed.

Again the cry, "A chair, sir?" No; still another try: a few hundred yards more and I shall be rewarded for my trouble. You continue your acsent, but the prospest has hardly changed. The road merely becomes wider; it is now a carriage road, bordered by a row of trees—and these trees are tree-ferns; their foliage being branches shooting out into the shape of a superb dome above your head. But one grows tired at last of ferns, even of tree-ferns. And where

is this vaunted vista? Where this matchless panoramic view? Perplexed, you glance furtively around you; the porters are no longer there. Surely there must be a boy, or some poor beggar, to send and fetch them? Not a soul. Here everybody works: thieves there are, but no beggars. Halting, you turn back. "A chair, sir?" They were there after all. Captured and beaten, you get in, and stretch yourself out, mopping your forehead. "Go on." They start and from that moment you may bid adieu to your mountaineering. As long as you remain at Hong-Kong, you will walk no more; you will be a captive to the sedan-chair, the 'push-push,' or the boat. Blaming yourself for it, you will accuse yourself of cowardice, and make resolutions. "A chair, sir?" and you are sure to get in. And in after years, should your fate take you to some less hospitable colony (there are such), when trudging along some rough, muddy or dusty road in the sun, you will with sorrow (no uncommon feeling in those parts) dream of those Hong-Kong porters, so irrepressible, so attentive, and such good fellows.

At last the summit is reached. On the highest point is an observatory; all around you are houses as commodious and elegant as those which you saw below; gardens, terraces, cricket-grounds, lawn-tennis courts.

running streams or, perhaps, springs. Turn your back on the town: there is the limitless expanse of ocean; to the right, the little port of Aberdeen with its docks, more especially sought for in stormy weather; further on, the Sanatorium of the Catholic missions. To the left, a few villas; narrow strips of cultivated land; a Chinese village; a farm where European and American cattle are being acclimatised; thence, in constant succession, at various points, till the summit is reached, water-works, aqueducts and, in dark cavernous recesses, deep reservoirs full of blue water, resembling undiscovered lakes. Now turn facing the town. On the steep incline the villas are lost to view in the dense mass of foliage; at one bound and without any interruption your gaze rests on the port beneath. Steamers look like boats, and boats like nut-shells. Farther away, the Kowloon Peninsula, the Hong-Kong and Whampoa docks, the arsenal, the dry docks, and still further away, but only visible on a clear day, a grey speck which is Canton. But the "shades of eve" are falling and you must descend: twilight in the tropics is short, and the nights are chilly. On your downward way you will catch glimpses, through the windings of the roads and in between the arches of the aqueducts, of the villas and the sea. Your

porters carry you along with lengthy strides. Reserve your visit to the Public Gardens and the Cemetery for the morrow and hasten to the harbour. The merchant princes, business being over, have ordered their steam-launches at a certain point: a party of friends and a supper await them on board. Have you no acquaintance among them who will invite you aboard? Make haste; they are about to start, veering round towards Kowloon, steam is suddenly shut off, and slowly dissolves while the boat hardly moves along. The gentle rocking of the waves, the unknown hour, the fading twilight—all unite in lending an infinite charm to this moment.

Night has come. The town is beginning to light up; above it, midst the foliage and along the winding roads one by one the villas are being illuminated, the lights casting weird shadows on the dark back-ground of the mountain. The landscape recedes into a vast expanse; the Peak stands out boldly against the deep azure sky. Silence is only broken by a shrill voice in some boat intoning a weird and melancholy cadence; the stars shine forth; your gaze is riveted on the heavens, and your mind recalls the past or wanders into dreams. Try not to recall enchanted countries and call up no charmed visions: before you lies Hong-Kong, forty years ago a naked rock.

CHAPTER II.

Reasons for Occupation—Discouraging circumstances attending the same—Intended Withdrawal—Eventual Retention.

AFTER a prolonged experience of over fifty years it is easy to sum up fluently and with precision the advantages accruing from the possession of Hong-Kong. A glance at the map is sufficient to note the position it occupies on the coast of China, at the base of a sector which embraces in its carve Yokohama, Shanghai, Singapore, Java, and Australia.

It is less easy, but still not difficult, to point out the causes which have assured its success, and transformed in less than half a century what used to be a rugged strand and an almost deserted roadstead into a busy port, and a hospitable city.

But in 1842, and in the following years up to 1848, these advantages were less apparent, and these causes infinitely more

obscure. In opposition to those who had advocated the occupation of Hong-Kong and still wished to retain it, adducing the most convincing arguments to prove its ultimate success, there were others who strongly favoured its abandonment and predicted failure on demonstrable grounds. Hong-Kong has long since proved a success, and the discussion is over. But it seems—and this must surely strongly urge more modesty—that everybody was mistaken. The statesmen who directed the policy of the United Kingdom greatly blundered: they occupied Hong-Kong anticipating advantages which lasted but a short time on account of the almost immediate change in the situation. The specialists, who with some show of reason criticised the Government, were mistaken; scarcely one of their arguments was verified, scarcely one of their fears was realised. Hong-Kong finally owed its prosperity to almost accidental causes which could with difficulty be foreseen, and which no one foresaw.

Hong-Kong, as we have seen, had been ceded to the British from the very beginning of the war; the cession was, however, merely a provisional one, and the victorious British, if they had so wished, could have exchanged it for an equivalent portion of some other territory. Now, at the commencement of the negotiations at Nankin which

led to the drawing up of the definitive treaty, they had possession of another island of scarcely greater extent on the east coast, a little beyond Shanghai, at a moderate distance from the mainland, namely: the island of Chusan. It seems that according to British opinions, the preference should have been given to Chusan. Chusan is not appreciably farther than Hong-Kong from the British possessions washed by the Indian and Pacific Oceans. As a trading depôt it occupies the same position towards Shanghai that Hong-Kong does towards Canton; regarding it as a military station it is of greater importance being nearer to the heart and head of the Chinese Empire; lastly it admits of more direct action, in case of need, over Japan, the Corea, and the rich provinces of Eastern China. Notwithstanding all this, the British gave the preference to Hong-Kong. This choice was not the result of ignorance, for the alternative was discussed; [1] nor was it due to scruples; moderation, or the fear of

[1] "You are authorised to propose the following conditions: if an island on the east coast of China be ceded to the British Crown for use as a commercial station by British subjects, the Chinese merchants and inhabitants of all the towns and cities on the coast of China will be authorised by the Chinese Government to come freely to that island, without hindrance or molestation, for the purpose of trading with the British subjects settled there." (Foreign Office Despatch of 3rd February 1841).

exasperating China: the real weakness of that State of colossal proportions had long been known to the Foreign Office.[1] British diplomatists were convinced that Hong-Kong on account of its proximity to Canton occupied a position preferable to any other.

Canton held, indeed, at that time, a position in the Chinese Empire which it has never since regained. With a population of two millions, it was the capital of a very industrious province, and the centre of a very extensive trade. It was the only town where foreigners were authorised to reside, a special quarter being assigned to them, and a powerful corporation, the Hongs, acting as their agents with the Chinese population. And so from all parts, tea, silk, lacquer, and the various articles of Chinese manufacture flowed into it for purposes of international exchange.

As this was the state of affairs, the British argued as follows: The Chinese being an ignorant people and slaves to routine—as at least they were still supposed to be at that time—will resume their old habits when peace is restored. What will be the use of the stipulated opening of four new ports—Amoy, Ningpo, Foo-Chow and Shanghai—to European commerce; the bulk of Chinese

[1] See the Report of the British Court of Inquiry on China which sat in 1830. The principal results were deposited in the "Bibliothèque Universelle."

produce will still be transmitted to Canton, which will thus retain its former supremacy. Matters will doubtless turn out differently for the people of Western countries. True, the former *régime* has enriched them; but, troublesome and vexatious it has exposed them to the caprice of the Mandarins, the exactions of the brokers, the violence of the crowd; they will, consequently, only return to settle in one or other of the open ports at the last extremity. But this very extremity will be spared them by Hong-Kong. Through its being adjacent to the largest market in China, it offers, under the protection of the British flag, a meeting-place and a centre of security and justice to both Europeans and Chinese. We may therefore flatter ourselves that foreigners will come and settle there, and that the brokers of Canton will readily cross the narrow arm of sea which divides the island from the mainland.

Now, if this supposition is realised, unexpected advantages will be secured at one and the same time: the jealous corporation of the Hongs will be got rid of, the island will be peopled with capitalists and rich merchants, buyers and sellers will alike be attracted to it, and it will become the longed-for emporium of that part of the world. Nor is this all. Possessing a hold on a vast metropolis, the centre of incalculable riches, as a sort

of pledge for the conduct of the Chinese Government: at the first insult on the part of the latter we can take possession of it, and under these circumstances Hong-Kong, from a military standpoint, represents what the Greeks termed ἐπιτειχισμα, namely, a fortified post commanding the enemy's country.

And all this seemed perfectly reasonable and admirably planned.

Finally, as a finishing stroke, the Chinese Government consented to recognise the Governor of Hong-Kong as Minister Plenipotentiary of her Britannic Majesty, and to accredit him to the Viceroy of the two Kuangs, who was himself invested with full powers. Seeing all this, Lord Derby was entitled to write: "We occupy Hong-Kong, not with the object of colonising, but of utilising it from a commercial, and a military point of view."

Acting upon these assurances, the Government and private individuals vied with each other in enterprise and audacity. Merchant settlers arrived in flocks; plans for a town were drawn up; warehouses, docks, barracks, law-courts, churches, schools and houses were built; sites—space being, as we have already said, very limited—realised extreme prices at auction, and already, after less than two years, it was thought that the most ambitious dreams were within measurable distance

of realisation, when—almost on a sudden—the enthusiasm died out; the life and vigour of the new colony seemed to subside.

Hardly anything of all that had been relied on, had been realised, and unexpected obstacles were encountered.

The advent of the Chinese had been reckoned on: they failed to come, and those that did come, one would have liked to expel. "The island of Hong-Kong," said a high British official in 1841; "will probably become the favourite resort of the smugglers and debauchees of that quarter of the globe." And his prediction was being fulfilled.

The most flourishing establishments of Hong-Kong were the opium-dens, the gaming, and other houses of worse fame. From the very first year, it was computed that there was a population of 91 women, whose place of abode no European, except the police, appeared to know. The Chinese immigrants belonged to the lowest grades of society. One solitary Chinaman of some respectability ventured to try his fortune there; his name,—which is on record—, was Chinam; he stayed some months, then returned to Canton and died there; it is asserted that the Mandarins would never have allowed him to return.

The advent of Europeans had been expected; but they, too, were not forthcoming.

The Parsees of India had shown some slight inclination to establish counting-houses, and offices had already been prepared for them, but they made no haste to put in an appearance, and they even tried—as far as can be gathered from the local press, which endeavoured to hold the Government responsible for this grievous state of affairs—to get rid of them. Of Englishmen, there were a few men of means, but they were all opium merchants. As the drug, as it was termed, could only be introduced fraudulently into China, they had made Hong-Kong, a much safer port for them than Macao, their central depôt, whither the smugglers came to fetch it. The other English houses one by one gradually went into liquidation. Suspicious-looking junks, and war-vessels or transports were the only ships that anchored inside the harbour.

What made it harder and more humiliating was, that the ports newly opened by the treaty of Nankin were thrown open to foreigners and actually reaped success. A thoroughly practical *modus vivendi* had been established at these ports: "concessions" in the charge of Europeans were exclusively reserved to the latter; dwellings and warehouses sprang up, uniting the comfort and security of European towns to the tempting vicinity of Chinese trade.

After some hesitation, and a few painful incidents, settlements at Ning-po, Amoy and, especially, at Shanghai were organised, and they soon attracted, to the detriment of Canton, a trade which was not unimportant, and which was likely to increase enormously.

Nor was this all. Canton which had promised to reopen its gates to Europeans kept them persistently closed. The population of that province had always been extremely inimical to Europeans, and both the Viceroy and the Government, instead of suppressing, fostered this feeling. Consequently, for the first few years after the war of 1841, Europeans could do little more than settle at Whampoa, the outer port of Canton, or in the suburbs outside the walls, the town itself being forbidden them.[1] And

[1] The text of the treaties concluded between China and the European Powers, though permitting that these ports should be thrown open to foreign trade, did not positively promise the entry within the walls of the towns. The Chinese text signified that Europeans might reside at either of the five ports, where the trading took place or the goods were landed, at the mouth of the river; that is to say, at places suitable for commerce, but which are not necessarily inside the fortified town. As the text was open to controversy, it was very variously interpreted. At Shanghai, for instance, foreigners were permitted to enter the town, so as to put a stop to the system of concession; at Canton and Foo-Chow the right of entering the town was denied them. The British Consul at Foo-Chow, however, resided in the town.

this, too, with absolute disregard of a solemn treaty, and with so manifest a contempt for the power of Great Britain that the British who for the sake of their expectations and their interests should have been delighted at this attitude of the Chinese, and should have profited by it to attract foreigners to Hong-Kong, found themselves obliged, in order to maintain their prestige, to demand the opening of Canton, and to send an expedition against it. The expedition was successful, and the opening of Canton was publicly promised for the Spring of 1849.[1]

But in the midst of all these reverses added to costly expeditions which were so detrimental to trade, and to the increasing

[1] In 1849, however, the promised opening was still further deferred. The Emperor of China wrote a curious letter to the Governor of Hong-Kong: "Empires," he said, "only last, as long as the people is protected. Now the people of Canton are unanimous in their refusal to allow foreigners to enter their town: can I have my imperial will proclaimed everywhere, and make it prevail against theirs?" In consequence of this, a proclamation was issued by the British authorities inviting their fellow-countrymen to relinquish their endeavours to enter Canton. (On all these points, see the "Chinese Repository" of the years 1849 and 1850).

In 1851 there were only 81 British residents at Canton: 5 consular agents, 1 clergyman, 1 missionary, 4 doctors, 22 merchants, 1 banker, 1 bank-clerk, 2 auctioneers, 18 mercantile clerks, 14 tea-tasters, etc. Besides these, there were 148 Indians who were British subjects.

development of Shanghai,[1] the manifest tendency of Chinese trade to set towards the east coast, and the despondency which pervaded even the most sanguine, Hong-Kong rapidly declined and seemed to be irretrievably lost.[2]

This twofold and severe check was still further increased by present mishaps, and fears for the future.

The new possession was terribly costly. Since its occupation the expenses had risen to an average of £250,000 per annum; the receipts never exceeding £10,000 to £12,000.

[1] In 1849, the business transacted with these ports, by European countries was distributed as follows:

I.	Canton:	British Imports	£1,646,000
		Exports	2,300,000

(The figures referring to the business of other powers are missing: they were insignificant.)

II.	Other open ports:		
	Amoy:	Imports	£1,496,000
		Exports	277,006
	Shanghai:	British Imports	974,000
		Those of other countries .	1,209,000
		British Exports	1,438,000
		Those of other countries .	1,754,000

Canton was, thus, left far behind.

[2] On the 13th August 1845, the British merchants and residents addressed a memorandum on the state of the colony to Lord Stanley, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. "After 4 years' occupation," they said, "there is scarcely a single foreign resident, beyond the officials and a few British merchants; amongst the Chinese merchants or even shop-keepers, there is not one who has any pretensions to the title of honest man."

And, already useless from a commercial point of view, it threatened to become equally so from a military, and a diplomatic standpoint.

It was felt that the Government of the Emperor of China was beginning to treat the "barbarians" and the "red devils" with less contempt; that it would soon take upon itself the investigation and settlement of matters which concerned them, so that ere long it would no longer be at Canton, but at Pekin that negotiations would have to be carried on. At the same time, experts gave it as their opinion that the island of Hong-Kong was strategically of no value. They affirmed that for defensive tactics there was no doubt of this; it could never be efficiently fortified, whatever amount were spent upon it; and, as to the offensive, the same conclusion obtruded itself still more forcibly: troops could not stand the climate and their numbers visibly dwindled away.

Neither of these arguments was necessarily conclusive; experience, however, extending over several years, amply proved their truth.

But the last objection raised against the new colony; its unhealthiness—which was a stern reality, and indeed did not disappear until close upon our time, was of a specially serious nature, and might well appeal to public opinion.

Prior to the British occupation, Hong-Kong

was scarcely known. The East India Company had indeed anchored its vessels there since 1837; and in 1839, during the opium riots at Canton, most of the merchant vessels trading to China repaired thither. But only the harbour was made use of; scarcely any one landed, or if they did so, they did not go beyond the beach; no one had ever stayed there for any length of time. Indeed, the climate had by no means a good reputation. From the earliest days of the occupation Sir Henry Pottinger wrote: "The climate of Hong-Kong is said to be unhealthy in the valleys which surround the paddy flats, where miasmatic effluvia abound; but the higher portions of the island are healthy; it will most probably be necessary to shift the rising colony to this higher ground so as to avoid the dangerous fevers so common amongst troops and settlers." But nothing is more difficult than to shift a colony even at an early stage of its existence; the people remained where they had taken land, and the result was an appalling mortality.

In 1842, a single man-of-war stationed at Hong-Kong, the *Agincourt*, lost half her complement of men and was obliged to recruit 160 sailors belonging to the merchant service. In 1843, out of 1,526 men in garrison, the number admitted into hospital was 7,839, *i. e.*, every man of them had been ad-

mitted five times. In twenty-one months the 98th regiment, 700 to 800 strong, had lost 257 men; the artillery, a select corps, out of 135 men had lost 51 in two years, besides 45 more, who were unfit for duty. General d'Aguilar wrote to Lord Fitzroy Somerset that Hong-Kong would cost Her Majesty a regiment of soldiers every three years. Ten miles off, at Whampoa, the outer port of Canton, the average death-rate was only 4½%; at Hong-Kong it was 24% among the troops, and 10% among the civilians. In a single year, 1844, the Governor, Mr Davis, fell ill and went on sick leave to Chusan, the Colonial Secretary went to Macao to recruit his health; the Surveyor General returned to Europe; the engineer of the colony, who had twice been laid up, betook himself to Macao; the Chief Justice, very ill himself, lost his eldest daughter and sent his son to England; the Chaplain took refuge in Manilla, the Civil Surgeon resigned, the Treasury was disorganised; so that out of 12 European families 3 disappeared entirely, and the others, utterly demoralised, left the island.

This extraordinary mortality was no doubt partially due to all sorts of imprudence, and as regards the troops, to excesses in eating and drinking, quite as much as to the insufficient barrack accommodation. But it must also be in a considerable measure attributed

to the climate itself, and there the enemies of Hong-Kong had a strong case. The temperature was subject to sudden changes, as must necessarily happen at a point where the tropical and the temperate zones meet; during six months of the year (from April to September) it was inordinately high 44° to 50° cent:) and the remaining six months were scarcely any better. On Christmas Day nearly 43° centigrade had been registered. The duration and copiousness of the rains were hardly credible: in the year 1845-46, from July to July, there was a rainfall of 92 inches in 142 days. Human precautions were powerless to cope with such a rainfall. Add to this that the sub-soil was composed of a species of disintegrated granite which under the action of damp became putrid and emitted noxious gases which no works, plantations, drainage, etc., were capable of exorcising. Under such circumstances what was to become of Hong-Kong?

And these were not mere isolated complaints. All were unanimous in their opinion of the climate, trade, and future prospects of the island. Dr. Thompson, Chief of the Hong-Kong Medical Staff, stated that "the island would never be healthy." Dr. McPherson who had just spent two years in China[1]

[1] "Two Years in China."

was of opinion that it (the island) possessed very few advantages with its bare mountains, its diminutive valleys, its abrupt declivities overhanging the sea, leaving scarcely any space for buildings; and its climate was far from healthy. Kowloon, opposite, appeared to him infinitely preferable. Another traveller, a Mr. Davidson,[1] remarked concerning Victoria the capital of the island, that a more ridiculous site for a town could not have been chosen. "It is open on the north and exposed to a cutting wind all through the winter; and in summer it is completely shut out from the cool southerly breezes which are so refreshing to exhausted colonists." A Frenchman, M. Xavier Raymond, who was then (18th August 1844) with Lagrené's mission at Macao, wrote to M. Armand Bertin, Editor of the *Débats*: "Thank Heaven, Macao, in spite of its nearness to Hong-Kong, which has been again this year nothing but a charnel-house,—is very healthy." Lastly, a British official, Mr. Montgomery-Martin, author of much esteemed works on China, and the British Colonies[2] commenced a campaign

[1] "Trade and Travels in the East."

[2] "China, political, commercial and social," 2 vols, 8vo, London, James Muilden, 1847. This work contains most of the documents and despatches relating to this subject published by the British Government, and laid before The House of Commons in February and March 1857.

destined to last twelve years through all the successive ministries, to bring about the evacuation of Hong-Kong. In the metropolis public opinion was as a rule hostile, while the newspaper articles were mostly alarming;[1] the Government, startled by these criticisms, called on the Governor for a categorical reply, and the latter admitted, with many apologies, that it would have been better not to have occupied the island. An official of high rank wrote to a friend on 25th July 1846: "Nothing is more significant than the change of tone adopted by the merchants. Not one of those with whom I have conversed entertains the smallest hope of maintaining Hong-Kong as a commercial station; it is simply a question of avoiding any further engagements, and of losing as little as possible beyond what has already been lost. The reduction of the forces in garrison, and the daily departures will complete the general collapse."

Lastly, Lord Grey who had been Secretary of State for the Colonies in Lord John Russell's administration, made the following

[1] A very severe article on Hong-Kong in "The Times" of 17th December 1844; further articles, one on 6th April 1846, another in July of the same year, on the deplorable state and the wretched prospects of the colony.

declaration a few years later.[1] "If it could have been foreseen what the total expenses would amount to, and what limited advantages this place would possess for our trade, it would not have been thought worth while to occupy it. But that had already been done long before our administration was formed; it only remained for us to endeavour to diminish the cost of an establishment which had been instituted on a scale worthy of the supposed importance of Hong-Kong at a time when it was confidently expected that it would become the great emporium of the trade with China. In 1846 it had already become evident that this would not be the case, and that the greater portion of our commerce would pass through the ports into which our merchants are admitted."

The question of abandonment had then been put. It appears that the proposal was again made, and more formally, in 1847, and in 1849.[2] But the British, a wise and experienced people, who from the time of Lord Bacon have been aware that a colony "yields no returns for twenty years and little

[1] "The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell's administration." 2 vols. 8vo, London, R. Bentley, 1853, 2nd Ed: p. 265.

[2] Report of the French Consul, M. Godeaux, dated 17th April 1863.

for fifty," and who, in taking over the colonies of other nations, have been able to form an estimate of the value of these waifs abandoned with scorn and contempt,—the British, on this as on other occasions, did not give up what they had once held. And events proved that they were right: ere long unforeseen circumstances occurred tending to confer on this almost useless place a commercial importance of the highest order; works systematically and perseveringly carried out had the effect of rendering the malarious climate more healthy; the deserted port and forsaken city were to become one of the most favoured and frequented places in the world.

CHAPTER III.

The first beginnings of the Colony—Diary of its earlier years.

In the annals of colonisation there is, perhaps, nothing more curious, or, regarded as a means of improving colonial policy, more instructive, than the study of the earlier years of a colony. The spectacle of all the vicissitudes of the undertaking, and of all the sudden changes of opinion, becomes at times almost emotional in its interest. And on the other hand, it is necessary to have had opportunities, either in the colony itself or in its parent metropolis, of observing the ardour and enthusiasm with which the work is undertaken, followed ere long by despondency and prostration; the intense efforts and the protracted intervals of inactivity; the fervour displayed for new leaders, the scorn for those continuing in office, the ingratitude towards those retiring; the occasional fits of reciprocal confidence, universal

good-will, and even sometimes fraternisation, followed in their turn by suspicions, disparagement and jealousies,—in order to be able to explain the abrupt mode of procedure, the spasmodic development, the symptoms of feverishness and incoherency which characterise the infancy and the adolescence of colonies.

Such a study furnishes, moreover, another lesson.

Many years must elapse before a colony can be fully developed. Founded, as it most frequently is, amidst the criticisms of some and the apprehensions of others, prosperity does not dawn upon it, as a rule, until both friends and foes of its early days are no longer there to rejoice together, or to acknowledge their defeat. And, as colonies form but a small portion of the entire globe, and their history but a chapter of the colossal history of the universe, it follows as a consequence that the career of each individual colony, and the legitimate conclusions to be derived therefrom, remain almost entirely unknown. Thus the same criticisms and the same apprehensions recur with every new undertaking, the example of those which have preceded it failing to calm fear or dispel sad forebodings. Such being the case, a book giving an account of the first beginnings of the

various colonies, and indicating their varied vicissitudes, their hopes, illusions, discouragements and successes could not fail to prove of inestimable value. It is as a contribution towards such a work that we have, with the aid of English documents and books, condensed into the form of a diary, a short account of the earlier years of Hong-Kong.

1841.—On the 25th Jan., at 8.15 a. m. the island was taken possession of by the British forces. Captain Charles Elliot R.N., Superintendent of the trade with China, is nominated ex-officio Governor of the new possession.—On the 30th Mar., Major Caine is appointed Chief Magistrate, and Mr. Johnson, Deputy Superintendent of trade.—1st May, first number of the *Official Gazette* (a weekly journal) published.—14th June, first sale of land. 51 plots put up to auction; the price consists in the payment of an annual rent: the purchasers further undertaking to erect, on each plot within six months, a building worth at least 1000 dollars. The total rent realised by this first sale amounts to £3,224. The largest buyers are Messrs. Jardine and Matheson, Dent & Co., and others.—Before the end of the year the island possesses a law-court, a prison, a cemetery, and a carriage-road. A colonist procures a two-horse carriage

from Manilla, to inaugurate the road.—Total population: 7,450.

1842.—The chief events of this year are the diplomatic negotiations ending in the signing of the Treaty of Nankin.—Works of urgent necessity executed.—The Chinese number already 12,300.

1843.—26th June, ratification of the Treaty of Nankin.—Sir Henry Pottinger who negotiated the treaty is appointed Governor.—The capital of the island is named *Victoria*.—The island is granted a colonial charter.—The appointment of Judges of the peace; the construction of law-courts and of a Court of Admiralty; the drafting of a table of dues and licenses, and the extension of commercial regulations are proceeded with.—First difficulties with the Chinese population; numerous thefts; the Chinese are compelled to carry a lantern at night; numerous cases of piracy and smuggling; both Chinese authorities at Canton and English authorities at Hong-Kong issue threatening proclamations, but to no purpose. First number of two periodicals published: the *Eastern Globe* and the *Canton Register*. Important branch of a large London firm established at Hong-Kong.—Inauguration of the Roman Catholic church.—The French man-of-war, *l'Erigone*, is the first to salute the British flag: an American vessel

refuses to do so, having received no instructions. — First arrival of ice (1st February). — Accommodation for settlers is hard to find; a small house letting as high as 13 dollars a month. — Organisation, though on quite a primitive scale, of a postal service: the postmaster forwards the entire batch of letters to the nearest addressee, with the request to forward those which are not for him by coolies to their respective destinations.

1844.—Town very unsafe; people compelled to sleep with a loaded pistol at hand. The opium merchants (opium being the only trade of any importance) do not land their goods; they leave them on board boats for the purpose (called *receiving ships)* in the harbour, on which also is stowed at night nearly all the colony's bullion.—In June, the second Governor, Mr. Davis, nominated.—21st August, a new regulation imposing a poll-tax on all Chinese residents: on hearing which they quit the island *en masse* for the mainland.—Institution of a supreme court of justice (21st August).—Publishing-office of the *Chinese Repository* transferred from Canton to Hong-Kong.—The Chinese number already 19,000, but they are not resident families; these only number 1,000 women and children.

1845.—21st February, first issue of the *China Mail*.—Slight improvement in the public health. The house of Jardine, Mathe-

son & Co. forms the centre of the European settlement. Around it are grouped some thirty dwelling-houses. A little further west are three or four more European houses, and a small Chinese village. Above, on the slope of the hill, are the buildings of *The Morrison Education Society,* the hospital of the *Missionaries Medical Society,* the Sailors' Hospital, and the residence of the Chief Justice. Further out in a westerly direction are temporary barracks, officers' quarters, the parade-ground, and the private residence of the Governor. Still further out and higher up the mountain is Government House. About fifteen streets constitute the whole of this embryo town.—13th August, first Peninsular and Oriental Company's (P. and O.) Steamer arrives, the *Lady Mary Wood.* [1]

1846.—Symptoms of discouragement amongst the colonists.—State of sanitation deplorable. Pirates abound: 80 pirates plunder the village of Spekpai-wan.—A monthly Portuguese mail established between Gibraltar and Hong-Kong; but its charges are exorbitant,—Difficulties in regard to the land occuptyeedh colonists; the titles of ownership have is hso put in order.—The first barrister establr,ibheei mself at Hong-Kong.—A small steam t ned *Corsair*, begins to ply regularly

[1] 650 tons, and 250 horse power. Ed:

between Hong-Kong and Canton.—11th August, a piece of land. with a sea-frontage of more than 200 feet, and bordered by a sea-wall, which cost 3000 dollars finds no purchaser at any price (this is only one out of ten such cases).—In August, the residents are officially warned not to go out unarmed, or beyond the precincts of the town.—The 'Triade', a Chinese Secret Society, establishes itself at Hong-Kong.

1847.—A great increase in the number of pirates; law passed against piracy.—Municipal measures; lighting: every European is bound to erect a lamp in front of his house.—A scientific society, the *Royal Asiatic Society*, establishes a branch at Hong-Kong, the *China Branch*.—In April, Major General d'Aguilar's expedition to compel the throwing open of Canton (the inner town) to foreigners.—6th April, convention fixing the opening for the spring of 1849.—In May, rumours of a Chinese attempt to seize Hong-Kong.—Numerous cases of piracy.—The Chief Justice, Mr. Hume, suspended from his duties.

1848.—Departure of the Governor, Mr. Davis; Sir George Bonham succeeds him.—The colonists demand a reduction of the ground rents paid to the crown.—Improvement in public health.—In July, the Chinese attempt to poison 25 men of the Royal Artillery,—Numerous cases of piracy; pirates

captured and condemned are pardoned; vigorous protests in the local press.—In August, great sickness amongst the troops in garrison.—The Chinese sell powder to the pirates.—An order of 31st August regulates the traffic in arms and ammunition.—The colonists bitterly complain of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's high charges, and the tardy manner in which goods are delivered.—The total population amounts to about 24,000.

1849.—The 95th regiment presents Mr. Jardine with a *cup* in recognition of his kind services and his efficient aid during the sickness that prevailed amongst the troops.—Up to 1st March, the Crown has sold, since the occupation of the island, 337 plots of ground, bringing in a rental of £13,327; but several of the lessees have been declared defaulters.—1st March, two officers assassinated by the native villagers of Chek-Choo.—Mortality increases.—The Governor of Macao assassinated by pirates.—2nd October, the British fleet destroys 23 pirate-junks.—3rd December, a plot of ground, bought for 1,000 dollars and considerably improved, is resold for 20 dollars.—Difficulties in regard to the regulations respecting landed property.—Project to establish a central market which, however, is unsuccessful.—Immense number of pirates annihilated between Hong-Kong and Cochin China.

1850.—17th February, the Court of Admiralty suppressed; the jurisdiction hitherto exercised by it restored to the courts of common law.—A heavy tax imposed on opium with a view to diminish its use amongst the Chinese; vigorous protests against this measure on the part of the colonists.—During the summer, up to the month of September, great mortality amongst the troops.

1851.—Situation continues precarious.—8th March, the *Economist*, a London paper, publishes an unfavourable financial article on Hong-Kong.—The Oriental Bank incorporated by Royal Charter.—Difficulty experienced in administering oaths to Chinese.—76 deaths amongst troops numbering less than 800 men.

1852.—A deputation of European colonists waits on the Governor to urge upon him the desirability of attracting Chinese colonists, and to propose, as a means to this end, that the rent of the ground occupied be remitted to them for the first year of occupation.—Transport of Chinese coolies to America: first departure for Peru.—The Governor, Sir George Bonham, leaves Hong-Kong; the Chinese present him with an earnest address of thanks and regret, a more or less spontaneous demonstration which the press characterises as a "gross

attempt at humbug."—He is succeeded by Mr. Bowring.—Repeated attacks on Europeans by Chinese.—Coolies mutiny on board the transports conveying them, the *Robert Brown* and the *Lady Montagu;* in this same year (1852), 6 similar cases, and 19 cases of piracy.—The island contains 37,000 inhabitants, 35,500 of them being Chinese; Victoria alone has 12,000 inhabitants, but the Chinese are not yet settled: over 12,000 of them have no other habitation than their house-boats

1853.—Establishment of bi-monthly mails between Europe and the colony.—In March, 14 cases of piracy in the immediate vicinity of Hong-Kong; two regular fleets of pirate-vessels sweep the seas.—In April, 13 cases; in May, 5 cases; the same number in June, and in July.—The vessel *Aratoon Apear* is seized by the Chinese crew, who massacre the officers, European sailors and passengers. —70 cases of piracy during the year.—Deaths among the troops: 56.

1854.—American Consul appointed.—Great development of coolie-transport to California: a vessel belonging to the firm of Jardine, Matheson & Co makes 90,000 dollars by a single voyage.—The Chinese of Hong-Kong come into open conflict with the police.—Crimean War: a Russian fleet signalled in the environs of Manilla; the colony prepares

to defend itself.—A number of the Chinese of Hong-Kong emigrate to Jamaica.—The English law of libel declared applicable to Hong-Kong.

1855.—Action brought by a colonist (supported, apparently, by a syndicate) against the Peninsular and Oriental S. N. Co., for delay in delivering goods.—11th May, treaty of commerce and friendship concluded with the Kingdom of Siam; return of Sir J. Bowring, who negotiated it.—Numerous cases of piracy.—The population numbers 76,600.

1856.—Armed attack on Messrs. Jardine & Co's house.—The Governor insists on the Crown lessees building on their plots.—Numerous deserters from the British ranks, who take refuge on board American whalers.—In the course of the year, the post of Surveyor General is occupied by three different persons: the sums appropriated to Public Works amount to £9,247.

1857.—Numerous vessels surprised, plundered, and burnt by Chinese pirates: from st November 1856 to 15th January 1857, 3 cases of piracy.—Attempts made to oison the Europeans *en masse*, at the instiation, it is said, of Chinese officials at anton.—These officials send orders to all hinese residents of Hong-Kong to leave e island; the total population then having en to 77,000 persons, of whom 75,500

were Chinese, and 1,500 Europeans. These numbers include 2,000 Chinese, and 500 European women.—"Praga Reclamation" works continued; progress made with docks.—Wide-spread conspiracy formed at Canton to ruin Hong-Kong by means of theft, murder, and incendiarism.—Innumerable cases of piracy by sea and land.—War with Canton: capture of Canton; measures adopted at Hong-Kong as a protection against the native population.

1858.—A Chinaman, (Wong Ashing by name) serves on a jury, for the first time on record. Government sets a price on pirates' heads.—Numbers of Chinese leave Hong-Kong, fearing that their families (which they do not bring with them) will be massacred by the "Braves" of Canton. Great commotion amongst the Europeans: no more servants, no market; meeting at Mr. Jardine's house.—In August, the Attorney General, Mr. Chisholm, suspended from his duties.—Innumerable cases of piracy: first expedition; a fleet of junks, some carrying from 12 to 18 guns, destroyed; a second expedition, and a third, necessitated by the fact that the war with Canton is scarcely ended.—Population of whites (Europeans and Americans), excluding troops: 1,462; number of deaths among this population during the year 1858: 110, or at the rate of 7.50 %.

1859.—Two Europeans publicly executed

for the murder of a *boy*.—Expedition against pirates.—In May, Sir Hercules Robinson succeeds Sir J. Bowring as Governor.—Further development of the coolie transport.—Hong-Kong not in favour with the British public.—In July, defeat of British troops at the mouth of the Peiho; serious apprehensions at Hong-Kong; no disturbance amongst the native population.—Numerous cases of piracy and theft.—Several actions brought against the press for libel.—New public market opened.—Docks constructed at Aberdeen by private enterprise.—The population of white civilians reduced to 1,031 persons, and the deaths to 70, or 6.66 %.

1860.—The new organisation of the customs in China by European officials, and their admirable working, which prevents smuggling, excites great discontent at Hong-Kong.—Difficulties regarding salaries of officials: they are paid in Mexican dollars reckoned to them at the rate of 4 shillings and 2 pence, though purchased [by Government] at five shillings and a half-penny. The establishment of a mint at Hong-Kong is demanded.—Anglo-French war with China.

1861.—Occupation of the Peninsula of Kowloon; great conference of the various authorities, the Governor, Admiral and General, as to the occupation of the portion

capable of immediate utilisation, situated along the sea-front.—Police organisation very defective: natives requisitioned from Bombay.—The population numbers 104,000, of whom 73,000 are housed in dwellings and 31,000 in boats. In 1860, the population of white civilians was 1,592; deaths: 51, or 32.0 %. In 1860, this population is reduced to 1,558, and the death-rate rises again to 101, or 6.48 %.

1862.—Formation of a volunteer corps.—28th February, proclamation prohibiting the export of arms.—Extensive fraud in opium warrants; a Parsee, by name Rustomjee, in league with the captain of the receiving ship *Tropic*, negotiates counterfeit warrants on which he obtains a loan of 1,500,000 dollars.—The Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society is dissolved; its library is distributed among various institutions.—For the first time, the post-office issues postage-stamps for letters.—Salaries are considerably raised: a servant earns from 21 to 63 shillings a month; a porter, two shillings and six pence a day. In 1860, a servant earned on an average 25 shillings, a porter from 1 shilling to 1 shilling and 10 pence.—25th June, prohibition to export arms rescinded.—Water-works nearly completed; they will have entailed a large expenditure.—There is a talk of lighting the town, and the side of

the hill, with gas.—In the course of the year, cotton, being no longer procurable from America, is partly obtained from Northern China. The quantity which passes into Hong-Kong amounts to 4½ millions of kilogrammes (in round numbers, about 9,920,000 lbs. avoirdupois).—Population of European civilians, 1,604; deaths, 46, or 2.24 %.

1863.—The Clock Tower inaugurated.—The Whampoa Docks opened; the steamer *Cadiz* belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Company is docked there for repairs.—The streets are lighted with gas-lamps.

1864.—Attack of pirates on a Danish brig anchored in the roadstead; fresh attack on the *godowns* of Messrs. Smith, Archer & Co. The Oriental Hotel Company opens a first-class hotel.—The Mint is erected at Causeway Bay, on a "reclaimed" plot of ground.—Proclamation of the Bankruptcy Act.—During the hearing of a law-suit, the court rules that it is lawful for a policeman to carry and to make use of fire-arms.—The Home Government demands that the colony should contribute a sum of £20,000 towards the military expenses (which amount to £100,000). This necessitates a tax yielding a corresponding amount. Considerable opposition in the Council. Debate of 8th September; motion in favour of the contri-

bution carried by the casting vote of the Governor; but a petition signed by the Europeans and Chinese is forwarded to the Home Government, praying for its remission.—Conflicts occur between the soldiers of the 99th regiment and the police.—Numerous murders.—Sale at Kowloon of plots of ground, on one of which docks are to be constructed.

1865.—Sailors' Home, West Point, inaugurated (19th January); Messrs. Jardine and Matheson had subscribed 45,000 dollars towards it.—The Chinese attack two river steamers.—Recrudescence of crime, owing, it is averred, to too much laxity in repressive measures. Thieves break into the *Central Bank of Western India* gaining entrance thereto by a subterranean passage which leads from the sewers to the strong-room.—Business extremely dull.—Besides the merchant princes, British merchants of moderate means begin to put in an appearance; the Chinese are *compradores*, retail dealers, brokers, and, above all, coolies.—Dwellings still very dear: a house letting in England at £40 a year, at Hong-Kong fetches 60 dollars a month.—Public health improving, for which, according to the press, no thanks are due to the Government.—Great increase in theft and murders: every Chinaman out-of-doors between 8 o'clock in the evening and gun-fire in the morning is obliged to

provide himself with a pass and a lantern.—The 15th April, 17 pirates sent to be tried at Canton.—A false report is spread of the death at Colombo of Sir Hercules Robinson.—Two rival Companies, Russell, and Heard & Co., undertake the service between Hong-Kong and Canton.—Constant changes of officials.—A Company is formed (15th June) to construct a railroad in China from Fatshan to Canton, 12 miles long.—A terrific typhoon on 30th June.—First steamer built at Hong-Kong, the *City of Hoe*, is launched.—Very considerable and very frequent fires.—A third Navigation Company is formed, *The Canton and Macao Steamboats Company*.—The *Public and Family Hotel Company* is started.—The population numbers 125,000, of whom, at the commencement of the year, 1,550 were Europeans: 1,100 men and 454 women.—There are 6,550 buildings; of these Europeans, Americans, and natives of Manilla and Goa, numbering 3,550, occupy 1,300; and 80,000 Chinese occupy 4,700.—From a sanitary point of view, the most deadly year for ten years. The civil population falls from 1,963 in 1864 to 1,034; the deaths almost as numerous, 100 instead of 109 in 1864, or over 10 % instead of 4.89 %.

In spite of all, 1865 is the year with which, as regards Hong-Kong, the era of beginnings closes. Doubtless it still has be-

fore it periods of difficulty and even moments of anxiety: but for the future it is well provided with everything needful; it has stood the test; it has self-confidence; and anticipating success, is bound to achieve it.

Nevertheless, we have seen that the grounds on which the founders of Hong-Kong based their prophecies of its prosperous future were fallacious, and that their first calculations proved erroneous. We have still to see how it has achieved success; what fortuitous circumstances have contributed to this achievement; how it has, so to speak, laid hold of success; and, lastly, by what means it has retained its hold upon it.

CHAPTER IV.

Development and prosperity of Hong-Kong—Decisive epochs.

FOUNDING a colony is like building a house. From the very first, great activity prevails. Capital is accumulated; workmen and materials arrive in constant succession; the owners appear in rotation to inspect, supervise, and hurry on the workmen. The building emerges from the ground, the stories rise one above the other; ere long the flag flies from the house-top.—And now the building only awaits tenants. If tenants are not forthcoming, the public which had admired the work from the first, and envied its promoters, at once turns round, and instead of anticipating its success, now prophesies its failure. Henceforth every room, even to the topmost garret, must be let before the public can be brought back to its former opinion, and even then the public will always view it with a certain amount of mistrust.

The same holds good with regard to a recently-acquired colony. The colonists arrive full of haste and ardour; they settle down, and procure the 'plant;' they bring from the metropolis all sorts of products intended for their personal use or for their business; the entries booked at the custom-house are splendid; statistics prove that there is a flourishing trade. Soon the premises are complete, the 'plant' is in full working order, clients only are looked for. If clients are not forthcoming, business decreases, statistics show a falling off, a town which had already been considered as too confined in area becomes a waste, discouragement weighs down the settlers' spirits; and public opinion now condemns what it had previously praised.

Then follows a period of silence: the colony is believed to be dead. It is, however, only slumbering and working quietly the while. And now it is simply a question of time.

A few years elapse, and with the arrival of new hands, fresh vigour replaces worn-out energy. Life is infused into it and by degrees the dying city is reanimated. A prosperous season will rouse it from its torpor; it will essay, and gradually develop its strength, and will afford to the astonished world a proof of its vitality, and its prosperity.

These phases of existence are, one and all, applicable to the colony of Hong-Kong. It makes a triumphant start. Colonists arrive in troops; the Chinese flock to it; from the second year of its foundation, the British exports exceed £720,000; in 1844 they reach £1,800,000; in 1845 they still amount to £1,520,000; in 1846 they fall to £1,200,000; in 1847 to as low as £760,000, and continue to decline gradually, year by year, at the rate of £80,000, £40,000, some £4,000 until in 1853 they amount to only £360,000. The colonists are disheartened, the Chinese waver, the finances collapse; in fact nothing is wanting to complete the picture.

At this point in its career public opinion prophesies ruin for the colony. The criticisms of the English press are very severe; the Government regrets its occupation; there is even talk of withdrawal. This state of of affairs lasts years. In 1863, *i. e.*, more than 20 years after its first occupation, the British exports still do not exceed £1,480,000 and the colony is a heavy burden on the Treasury. And yet, those who carefully followed the course of events in the Far East, and knew the actual condition of Hong-Kong, were aware from as for back as 1850 that its cause was already won and its future secure. It was only biding its time. Fortune which never deserts the bold

and the obstinate gave it that opportunity by the discovery of gold in California, and in Australia.

The Chinese, generally speaking, lack what we call patriotism. In 1844, they refused their services to the French vessels lying in the Hong-Kong harbour, and their action meeting with determined disapproval from the English, with the usual bluster which constitutes their strength, they struck work almost to a man. In 1850, however, their feelings were less delicate. The British had attacked and beaten them in 1842: and had besieged and taken Canton in 1847: but the people of Quang-Tung and Fu-Kiang came none the less to proffer their services to their conquerors of yesterday. When, in 1849, they heard that the British at Hong-Kong were endeavouring to procure their admission into America with a view to their working in the gold mines (a lucrative occupation), they came in their thousands, and thus aided in establishing at Hong-Kong a very profitable industry: viz., the transportation of emigrants.

This was what the English call a "turning point." Only yesterday, the colony was languishing and uncertain of the morrow; to-day, it finds, at length, an object on which it can expend its energy: it is saved.

The transport of coolies, *i. e.*, of men fit

for any kind of work, rapidly attained to great importance. There had, already, for some time past, been a tide of emigration—though a feeble one—towards Singapore, Peru, and the Antilles; now this tide was to flow with a stronger current in another direction. California, cut off from the other states of the Union by the vast American continent, welcomed immigrants from all parts, and in proportion to the number of new-comers discovered new territories, and especially new mines, to be worked. For similar reasons Australia, being more isolated and less populous, desired a still larger influx of people. Thus there was a constantly recurring demand for labour. The Chinese responded to this demand by a constantly increasing offer of labourers. There are no people that more readily accommodate themselves to the idea of expatriation, though it be but temporary. All climates suit them, they are satisfied with any position. When once they know whither they are going and what awaits them on their arrival they offer themselves in serried ranks. They have, moreover, furnished an enormous contingent to all countries willing to receive them, and as long as these countries have wished it: to California, the Antilles, Australia, Singapore, Saigon, the Philippine Isles, Panama, etc.

Under these circumstances, in two or three

years' time, emigrants became very numerous: Hong-Kong being the only port in the neighbourhood which at that time possessed an almost complete equipment for this class of transport, naturally became their port of embarcation. Some embarrassment was, nevertheless, experienced just at first. Thousands of passengers had to be conveyed every year for thousands of miles. In 1851, 8,000; in 1852, 30,000; in 1853, 9,000 all to California; in 1854, over 15,000: 10,500 of them to Australia, and 3,000 to California; from 1852 to 1857, over 24,000 to Havana alone; in 1858, about 14,000 to various destinations. The voyages lasted on an average three months; the accommodation of the vessels was rather limited, and the rates of transport were extravagantly high. A vessel with accommodation for some hundreds of passengers received 90,000 dollars for a single trip to San Francisco· Although this was an exceptional rate, the transport of coolies was, as a rule, an extremely profitable business.

Unfortunately, it speedily declined. The rapacity of the contractors, and the cruelty of their agents could only be compared to that of slave-dealers. The coolies were crowded into a narrow space, which soon became a hot-bed of infection; they were left there nearly starving, and absolutely

uncared-for; the mortality was appalling; of 24,000 conveyed to Havana, 3,500 died in transit, or rather over 14 %. This is equal to the death-rate of the worst type of slavers. The coolies mutinied, seized the vessels, and massacred the crews. These scandals which were at their height about the year 1857, roused the indignation of the British who, officially, are very humane. They did not go to the length of prohibiting the transport of coolies: that would merely have benefited Macao, where this industry was carried on on an enormous scale and under still more deplorable conditions. But they instituted a more rigorous supervision, they imposed certain regulations in regard to sanitation and humane treatment, which were increased in stringency from time to time, with the result that Chinese emigration improved in condition, but diminished in extent year by year.[1] The number of emigrants in 1860 only amounted to 12,800; in 1862, to 10,400; in 1862, to

[1] See *House of Commons* 27th July, 1858, and 12th June, 1868, documents Nos. 381 and 428. Still, though closely watched, put to expenses which were unknown when it started, shut out from Canada, the United States, and Australia, Chinese emigration has none the less continued to our day. It peoples Singapore, Manilla, etc. In 1882, the number of emigrants sailing from Hong-Kong alone reached 79,000; in 1883, 57,000; 1884, 46,000.

7,800; in 1864, to 6,600; in 1865, to 6,850; and in 1866 to only 5,000. It was, however, destined to flourish anew at a later period.

But from the year 1857 Hong-Kong was no longer entirely dependent upon the transport industry: events had recently occurred which, although altogether unforeseen—on this we must lay special stress,—justified the predictions of the founders of the colony; it became the necessary refuge of the Europeans and of the principal Chinese merchants of Canton, Amoy, etc.: the Taiping rebellion was spreading to Quang-Tung.

The chief of the Taipings was a native of Quang-Si, and it was at that place, and especially in the neighbouring province of Quang-Tung, that he had recruited his first adherents. In 1850, a state of uneasiness and disquietude greatly prejudicial to trade was already noticeable. In 1852 and 1853, this feeling became more pronounced: Amoy and then Shanghai succumbed to the rebel forces. In 1854, disturbances broke out throughout the entire province; rebellion reigned supreme; the "Braves" of Canton and the peasants living in the neighbourhood marched their formidable bands in all directions, and it is estimated that almost a third of the population of Canton fled at the approach of the rioters. And so the Chinese began to arrive at Hong-Kong, at first in

isolated groups, then in large contingents.[1] Finally, in 1856, the European factories were menaced, the regular authorities who still retained the mastery in Canton took no measures to restore order, the British fleet had to besiege and bombard the town; Macao was reduced to a state of starvation, and last of all (December 1856) the European factories were burnt.

Hereupon a general exodus took place. European refugees of all nationalities and thousands of Chinese betook themselves to Hong-Kong. They came, as from the first it was hoped they would come, to seek under the British flag the security indispen-

[1] These sudden additions to the population of Hong-Kong occasioned veritable crises, in the sense that this word is used in medical science, and in political economy. During the year 1855 there had been an influx of close upon 17,000 fresh inhabitants; and owing to this fact, the price of building plots, the rent of houses, the receipts from taxes, the police expenditure, all showed a remarkable increase. In 1856, the population remained stationary, if indeed it did not decrease (approximate number 72,000, as in 1855); the receipts diminished immediately, being £32,500 as against £42,500 in 1855: the expenditure, on the contrary, increased, it having been found necessary to augment the police-force, involving an extra outlay of £1,950; and the civil budget amounted to £42,450, as against £40,840 in 1855. In order to continue the public works which had been undertaken, the reserve-fund of the preceding years had to be drawn upon. In spite of this, however, confidence in the future of the colony remained unshaken.

sable to commerce; they brought their capital and such goods as they had rescued; and lastly many brought with them—what was likely to prove of more lasting effect—their families. The town—another change—became inconveniently crowded; the houses were all full; shops were converted into more or less commodious dwellings; and the Chinese found accommodation in the junks. The income derived from house property rose enormously, and the rent charged for building-plots was exorbitant.

The year 1858 witnessed a continuation, and even an increase, of this prosperity. The Peiho expedition necessarily brought a crowd of guests to Hong-Kong; the naval and military requirements doubled the amount of import; all the new-comers, especially those from Europe, left a large sum of money on the market. It was one of those occasions when money is spent without keeping account. This continued in 1859, and was still more pronounced in 1860. It was after the conclusion of the first Treaty of Tientsin, and during the preparations for the second expedition. Numerous newly arrived troops, a whole fleet and many staffs filled the roadstead and the town. All available sites were occupied: negotiations were being entered upon with the Viceroy of Canton for the free disposal of Kowloon.

Finally, the victory of the Allies, and the second Treaty of Tientsin filled all hearts with enthusiasm and confidence. Under the influence of these events, British exports rose, in 1857, to £720,000; in 1858, they reached £1,120,000; in 1859, £1,960,000; in 1860, £2,440,000 and in 1863, were still at £1,480,000.

The official documents of this epoch give evidence, moreover, of the joy that was felt, and the expectations that were entertained. In the *Blue Book* of 1858 (which appeared in 1859, the Governor, Mr Mercer, speaks of nothing but the enterprising spirit which animates the colony. Public markets had just been inaugurated; docks constructed at Aberdeen with private capital and without any subsidy from the Government; the Chinese were flocking to the place, happy to find on British territory security and justice for their persons and their property. And the enthusiasm continues; the strangers, guests of the new colony, share it equally with the residents. "Hong-Kong," writes the French Consul in 1863, "thanks to its geographical position; to its roadstead, which can accommodate and give shelter to an immense number of vessels; to the security and freedom with which business can be transacted; to the absence of any import-duty; to the steam-communications of which

it is the centre; and to the comparative salubrity of its climate, has become the head-quarters of a considerable traffic, and the emporium of Southern China not only for the products of Europe, America and India, but also for those of China itself."

From this time forward the future of Hong-Kong was assured, and we need not now follow step by step its further progress. Let us confine ourselves to noticing the chief, and the later episodes of its economic development.

A law of mechanics tells us that every action is followed by a reaction in a contrary direction and of equal strength. The same holds good with regard to business: the whole of the ground gained is not lost by such reactions, otherwise progress were impossible; but every period of activity is followed by a period of stagnation. Hong-Kong could not avoid the operation of this law. The years 1864 to 1868 were deplorable, not to say disastrous.

It must be admitted that after the progress alluded to above the colony and, indeed, the whole of European China had been seized with a species of madness. The American War had made China, and especially India, purveyors of cotton to the whole world; there had consequently been a perpetual exchange of goods and of paper

between these countries and Europe. Hong-Kong being on the direct route had been able to accumulate at its port immense quantities of cotton, tea, and other colonial produce; the Parsees of India brought thither considerable sums of money with a view to commercial intercourse with Indo-China and the Chinese empire. More banks were opened than were needed. In 1862 and 1863, Hong-Kong and Shanghai could boast of five banks; in 1864, their number was eleven; and unlimited competition was the result.

Thus the years 1865, 1866, and even 1867 were notable for the financial catastrophes which occurred either at Hong-Kong itself or in China, but which invariably reacted upon the business of Hong-Kong. Imprudent and unfortunate speculations in tea, and in landed property, in the Yang-Tse Valley and at Shanghai, swallowed up nearly £6,000,000, in which speculations Hong-Kong itself was largely involved; the rice-trade with Indo-China (Siam and Saigon) was fettered by a bad harvest; the opium trade remained dull; the colony, pressed for money,—the Home Government justly demanding a contribution of £20,000 towards the military expenditure,—resorted to vexatious fiscal measures, and taxed either the natives or business transactions (an *ad valorem* duty

of ½ or ¾ % on bills of exchange, drafts to order, and bank bills payable to bearer, or at sight); lastly, to crown all, the American war having come to an end, there was an immediate cessation of the cotton-trade. The settlement was a grievous one: numerous failures; first-class houses compelled to suspend payment; the Chinese leaving in thousands.

This continued throughout the year 1867, and even into 1868; the colony was exhausted and disheartened and—a characteristic sign—people began again, in order to reassure themselves, to talk of the natural advantages of Hong-Kong, of "its admirable position which ought to make it the fountain-head of commerce with China and Japan," when—another surprise, a further turn of Fortune's wheel so lavish in her favours towards this colony—an event occurred which assuredly could not have been foreseen by the founders of the colony: the Suez Canal was opened, superseding the long voyage round the Cape, placing Hong-Kong within a month's journey of Europe, and giving an irresistible impulse to exchange with the Far East.

This time, all doubts are dispelled: Hong-Kong will survive; Hong-Kong will be rich and powerful. It will, like the rest of the commercial world, still have its ups and

downs; mistakes will still occur, it will speculate to excess in building-sites, as it did in 1882 and 1883; it will suffer from the reaction of external events, such as the Franco-Chinese war of 1884; it will launch out into hazardous enterprises, such as the *Praga reclamation*; it will see the value of land, even that of the Peak, the most expensive and favourite quarter, fall to 24 cents the square foot; but henceforth it is armed for the struggle, its future is secure.

We have still to determine what portion of this success, which has, apparently, so far, been due to chance alone, may be credited to human agency.

CHAPTER V.

Methods of Government and Administration—The Chinese—Security, Justice, and Education.

In establishing themselves at Hong-Kong the British should have been, and in fact were, aware that their success depended mainly on the attainment of one thing, viz.: the co-operation of the Chinese inhabitants of the mainland, and not so much of the authorities, though it was not a matter of indifference whether the latter were for or against them, [1] as of the trades-people, the

[1] The British endeavoured to maintain the best possible relations with the authorities of Canton. This, unfortunately, has not always been an easy matter. After the conclusion of the Treaty of Nankin, there was a prolonged contention with reference to the re-opening of Canton; then followed the Taiping rebellion; and later, the expeditions against Pekin. In order to establish on a cordial footing the relations between Hong-Kong and China, our reverses of 1870, and above all our war with China of 1884 were necessary, although the connection may not be evident. At the present day, the Chinese authorities readily visit the colony; the two powers mutually surrender, (with certain exceptions), criminals claimed by their respective courts, etc.

compradores, and the coolies. Coolies were required as workmen, trades-people to supply them with provisions, *compradores* to introduce the British to the native markets and to act as intermediaries in their business transactions, pending the advent of those substantial Chinese merchants who, by virtue of their ability, daring, and honesty, take rank in the commercial world as the most formidable rivals of the Anglo Saxons. If these various classes were not simultaneously forthcoming and in sufficient numbers, the colony would be incapable of acting the part to which it aspired: that of intermediary between Europe and China.

Of this point the Europeans were well aware. Far from dreading the presence of the Chinese, they were anxious that respectable Chinese citizens should come in numbers and settle amongst them; and we have seen that, in the earlier years of the colony, they petitioned the Governor to grant certain concessions to those Chinese immigrants who might settle on the island, as an inducement for them to come.

And the Chinese who, as universal experience proves, are easily attracted, at once flocked to the island. Unfortunately, the first to come were not exactly the class of people needed, and their presence, though useful in more than one respect, entailed

manifold complications of a nature to put the wisdom and patience of the British officials to the test.

The provinces which furnish, perhaps, the largest contingent of emigrants in the whole Empire are precisely those in the immediate vicinity of Hong-Kong, viz.: Quang-Tung and Fu-Kiang; but the emigrants from these provinces are more often than not anything but desirable recruits. They belong to different, and hostile races: the Hakkas, who usually do coolie-work, and the Puntis [1] who chiefly find employment as *boys* and *compradores*. As a result, quarrels and strife, occasionally very serious, and which the European administration cannot view with indifference.

And besides, all, or nearly all these people are poor, uncouth, uneducated, and above all, utterly unscrupulous. They crowd round the Europeans, because money can be made, but they display no affection [2] or esteem, and remain strangers to their civilisation. They have no notion of cleanliness or hygiene,

[1] "Punti" really signifies "native of the country." It is therefore a misnomer to use the word as a distinctive appellation for one of the native races.

[2] "At Hong-Kong where 30,000 Chinese are regularly employed, they would not hesitate, at a given signal, to massacre all the Europeans." (Extract from an official report of 1874). "It is rather the European community wich is in need of protection." ('Her Majesty's Colonies,' p. 460).

and a positive repugnance to sanitary regulations and besides an immoderate passion for gambling coupled to deplorable morals due especially to the absence of their families. They despise woman, whom they doom and bring up to a life of prostitution, using compulsion, if necessary, and lastly they evince a peculiar liking for secret societies. All these habits and vices, not to be tolerated by a European Government, afford, when placed in juxtaposition with the necessity of attracting many Chinese to Hong-Kong, some idea of the difficulties with which the British had to contend.

They overcame them, however, and it will not be unprofitable to learn how they contrived to reconcile interests and needs so diametrically the opposite.

Just at first, it was advisable not to be too particular. Workmen were wanted to build the town, to cut roads, to excavate zigzags on the hillside, to work at the quays: so the gates were thrown wide open, and the imperfections of those who entered in were overlooked. Nay, more; inducements were held out to new-comers, attentions to which they could not be insensible: to those who lived on their house-boats Causeway Bay was offered as a refuge affording all possible security against stormy weather, and what was greatly to the liking of those who

settled on land, a separate quarter was assigned to them.

But, though their advent was greatly to be desired, supervision could not be neglected. The organisation of the police has been one of the first and most lasting difficulties which the local government has had to contend with. The problem is more complicated than appears at first sight. Europeans are costly; their health soon gives way, and Chinese customs are unknown to them; Chinamen, on the other hand, though more suitable, are liable to be too lenient towards, if not actual accomplices of, criminals; and it is to be feared, moreover, that in the exercise of their power, all sense of respect, even towards Europeans, might desert them; Indians, being hardier than Europeans, by disposition more respectful than the Chinese, and being well used to discipline, are capable of rendering good service, though they are wanting in tact, and require to be well officered. None of these three elements, then, was suitable, taken singly, so that an amalgamation of the three was resolved on. Their number and proportion have, of course, varied with the course of time. In 1860, or thereabouts, the relative numbers were, 60 Europeans, 100 to 110 Chinese and some 300 Indians. In 1887 the force contained 100 Europeans, 200 Sikhs, and 400

Chinese. The large proportion of Chinese noticeable during late years indicates the progress made, and the increased confidence they command. One detail must, however, be mentioned: Chinese policemen are required to furnish security to the amount of fifty dollars each.

In an island, especially one so near a mainland which affords so safe a refuge, the robbers are not all on land. At Hong-Kong there is a floating population—a fact which we can appropriately mention here—of 30,000 or 40,000 persons who have no other habitation than their boats. All along the sea-shore are well-stocked warehouses, and docks full of merchandise; in the middle of the roadstead ships laden with cargo lie at anchor; the port is free, but opium is farmed out, and an import-duty is levied on alcohol: these are circumstances, therefore, very tempting to thieves and smugglers. And so, of a police-force numbering 750 men, about 300 do duty on the water, patrolling the harbour in their swift police-boats, and maintaining a constant watch, especially at night.

In addition to thieves and smugglers, there are pirates. Those of Hong-Kong have gained notoriety. The natural conditions of these parts and the course of events favoured them greatly. Islands, so well adapted to

their requirements that they received the name of the *Ladrones*, and indented with shallow creeks, where light craft could lie in ambuscade or find a refuge were near at hand; and the coast of the mainland was broken up into an infinitude of inlets, and abounded in shelters. The inhabitants were natural accomplices of the bandits, sharing with them their hate for, and occasionally the spoils of, the Europeans; the authorities, from the humblest to the highest, detested the British, and lent themselves with evident repugnance to the watching and suppression of pirates. Lastly, on two occasions, just after the opium war (1842 to 1844), and later, during the period of the Anglo-French expeditions (1857 to 1860), occurred the possibility of passing off acts of mere brigandage as acts of pure patriotism. All these circumstances were favourable to the growth of piracy on a large scale.

Accordingly it developed to an unheard-of extent in the seas surrounding Hong-Kong. Of this we have already given some idea in a preceding chapter. The junks engaged in these operations might be counted by thousands. It even went so far that the pirates actually scoured the seas in fleets, no attempt being made at concealment. They carried a number of guns, and even

attacked steamers; the *Spark* episode (1874) is still well remembered. It was often found necessary, and notably in 1868, to adopt special measures, and positively to organise expeditions against them. The happiest possible results attended these. The systematic destruction of innumerable junks acted as a check on the pirate's trade.

At the present day, owing to the development of national and international commerce, the habit of regular occupation acts as a restraint on a host of people who, twenty years since, were predestined to a pirate's life. At the same time, the Chinese Mandarins have changed their views: far from protecting bandits, they wage a war with them which might be characterised as envenomed, were the agents entrusted with its conduct, only more able, or less indulgent. Lastly, gun-boats and war vessels specially deputed to this service are constantly cruising in suspected localities.

In spite of this, piracy has not entirely disappeared from the waters of Hong-Kong. Pirates still infest the coasts of Quang-Tung. In October 1885, the *Greyhound*, a British steamer, was seized, when sixty miles distant from Hong-Kong, by pirates who had taken passage in her. Even the port of Victoria is not always free from them. In December 1887, three singularly bold attacks occurred

in a single week. In 1890, the *Namoa* incident created a profound sensation throughout the Far-East.[1] It is evident that, to extirpate piracy thoroughly, combined action on the part of the British, French, and Chinese is necessary.

These repressive measures ought, apparently, if only on the ground of their efficacy, to have had a diametrically opposite result to that which the British desired. If they were intent upon attracting the Chinese, concerning whose morality one must, as they knew, not be too particular, it was a singular means of attaining their end: that of subjecting them to the most rigorous supervision, and mercilessly hunting down their fellow-countrymen. But this line of argument, though apparently correct, in reality is not so.

The Chinese entertain, in a degree unknown

[1] The *Namoa* left Hong-Kong on the 10th December 1890, having on board 220 Chinese deck passengers. They were emigrants returning to China with the savings they had accumulated at Singapore. At a given signal, some fifty of them, clothed in a kind of uniform, rushed upon the crew and the ship's officers, wounded them and seized the vessel and everything of value which it contained. They were pursued; but it was not until later that the Chinese admiral Tong discovered their whereabouts, and took them prisoners. (See some curious articles on piracy written in 1890 by the American, Colonel Guilder, correspondent of the San Francisco *Examiner* during the Franco-Chinese war).

to us, a respect, nay, an admiration, for force. This feeling is so strong with them, that at times it gets the better of their love of justice. Concessions, even though they be just, run the risk of being regarded by them as weakness; the toleration of culpable acts, as nonsense. On the other hand, the Chinese colony at Hong-Kong was composed of the most diverse elements. In addition to cut-throats and thieves, the objects of these precautions, there were Chinamen who were rich or well-off—a class likely to rapidly increase—to whom these very precautions gave confidence; there were poor, and even depraved, Chinese who found it more profitable to work than to steal, and who regarded these "vexations" as the necessary price of an abundance of work and a regular salary; lastly, there were a host of, possibly indifferent individuals, but who attached inestimable value to certain benefits of British civilisation, and to the greatest among them, namely, law and justice.

One must have lived under an autocratic and irresponsible *régime* to appreciate a moderate and just one. The Chinese, at the hands of their Mandarins, had been able, at that period even more than at the present day, to learn to appreciate the protection accorded them by British law and magistracy.

Let us pay this tribute to the Anglo-Saxons: no people has a greater regard than they for conformity to law. Other nations pride themselves specially on their humanity, and their conduct may perhaps in general be more humane, which practically constitutes an inferiority, though morally an honour. But in regard to laws their views are less decided. With almost all of them there is a fund of Jacobinism which impels them so forcibly towards the goal they are aiming at that they end by neglecting the legitimacy of the means employed. More than one decision, whether in the sphere of law or of politics, might be brought to light which could with difficulty be reconciled with justice.

The British, on the other hand, have with few exceptions, a respect almost amounting to a religious belief, for law and justice. Their official correspondence shows what a dread they have of arbitrary procedure. Open, for example, the special reports: they consist entirely of rules relating to the judicial *personnel* and their jurisdiction, and the application of certain laws to certain classes of individuals. One out of every two orders has reference to the better administration of justice, or to the enactment of laws better adapted to their special purpose.

The protection thus afforded is an exceedingly valuable one, and the majority of the Chinese fully appreciated it. The British, moreover, earned for themselves a further title, we will not say to their gratitude, but to their obedience. In addition to security, and justice, they granted them a benefit, the concession of which was flattering to their pride or their ambition, viz., a sort of equality in the eye of the law, and of the administration.

European nations, the British among them, have long thought it their duty, in these distant lands, to shield their fellow-countrymen, in their intercourse with the natives, from the vexatious consequences of their acts. In India, in Indo-China, and in all the colonies belonging to European nations in those latitudes, an offence committed by a European against a native is not, and necessarily cannot be, of the same importance as an offence committed by a native against a European. At Hong-Kong, however, the British on more than one occasion abandoned these pretentions: be a *boy* killed or wounded, or a coolie unmercifully beaten, a search was made for the perpetrators of such acts, and woe to them if discovered. Natives or Europeans, they found no mercy.

This impartiality which, however, was never abused, produced an excellent effect on the

Chinese; as did also the humanity shown—as we have already seen—in the regulations for the transport of emigrants.

At the same time, care was taken not to violate their customs, nor to place any restraints upon their civil, religious, or other ceremonies. And above all, they were afforded what they very fully appreciate, the means of educating themselves.

A whole chapter would be required to explain the educational arrangements at Hong-Kong. What is most worthy of admiration is, the untiring zeal of those in charge of this department. The people with whom they had to deal belonged to the humblest and poorest class; like all the Chinese, they professed great respect for science; but they were reluctant to trust their children (the girls especially) to schools opened by the Government. Add further that these children were often indifferent scholars; or again, that their parents, having need of them for their daily work, sent them late to school, or took them away too early: whatever the cause, the fact remains, that for a series of years, the results were very poor.

In 1852, with a population of over 37,000, of whom 35,000 were Chinese, there were only five schools, with a total of 134 pupils, for the use of the Chinese; in 1857, the

number had only risen to 21 with 735 pupils, of whom 40 were girls, and in the same year, (1857) the scholars who had completed their course of education at these schools could not furnish a single competent interpreter. Ever since 1851, the colony had devoted an annual sum of £250 towards the maintenance of six selected scholars at *Bishop's College*, and for six years not one of these subsidised scholars had been able to render the smallest service as interpreter. From 1860 to 1870 the results were no better; the number of schools and scholars remained almost stationary; this was, however, the final stage of a fruitless period.

In 1876, the schools numbered 54, the scholars 3,100; this number includes 16 schools, with 1,800 scholars, conducted by natives. In 1887 there were 95 schools under inspection, and 110 private schools; the majority being Chinese. Among those under inspection, 15 belonged to the Government, and were unsectarian and gratuitous; 19 were subsidised Chinese schools, distributed among the villages on the island; and 61, sectarian schools, 55 of them gratuitous, belonging to ten Missionary Societies.

The present number of scholars is about 8,300, of whom 6000 frequent the inspected, and 2,300 the other schools. Three dialects

of Chinese, as well as English and Portuguese, are taught. Besides this, some of the best scholars are sent to England to go through a course of study in medicine, law, or real and applied science. In 1882, one of these students, by name Ho-Kai, passed first in the examinations at Lincoln's Inn, and is at present a Privy Councillor at Hong-Kong. After completing their studies, they obtain on their return to the colony, easy and profitable employment, either in one of the professions, or under Government, provided they pass a competitive examination open to all British subjects without distinction as to race or religion.

By the adoption of the various measures alluded to above, concerning the general nature of which it would have been interesting to enter into further detail, the British have succeeded beyond their expectations. The Chinese population numbers about 210,000 souls. Canton lies so near, and the journey by steamers, which charge a fare of 6*d* and can carry 3,000 passengers, is so easy that this number varies from one season to another: if the harvest on the mainland is bad, thousands of emigrants flock to the island; on the other hand, if there is the slightest cause for discontent, thousands of others quit the island for the mainland. In spite of these vicissitudes, the

Chinese population is continually on the increase. [1]

It is composed, as it always has been, of coolies, *boys*, mariners, retail tradesmen, and wholesale merchants, and lastly, of the gradually diminishing number of intermediaries called *compradores*. A curious circumstance to those acquainted with the customs of the Far-East is the presence of Chinese women in considerable and ever increasing numbers. In 1861, there were 26 women to every 100 men; in 1871, the proportion was 28 to 100; in 1881, 30; in 1891, 31. It is hardly necessary to observe that they are not women of the higher classes.

The class—by far the most numerous—of working men (coolies, mariners, labourers, etc.) has been, and still is, the cause of more than one anxiety to the local authorities. It is surprising that, tractable as they are in business matters, they should accom-

[1] The attention of the Chinese Government was drawn to this, when it proposed, in accordance with the terms of the treaties, to appoint a consul at Hong-Kong. The Chinese do not need a consul to protect their interests: the British law and the Registrar General who is their appointed protector, suffice. This consul would either be a spy placed by the Chinese Government to keep a watch over the more important of his fellow-countrymen, or an agent who would incite the more turbulent to revolt. The Chinese Government has, however,—of its own accord, so says the English press—relinquished this idea.

modate themselves with such difficulty to the laws of morality, the police regulations, and to habits of cleanliness and hygiene.

The abduction of children, especially young girls, who are sold to houses of ill-repute, has many a time occupied the attention of the police and the law courts. [1] From another point of view, whenever certain precautions have been enforced in the interests of public health, there has been a near approach to riots. In this respect, however, they appear to be becoming more amenable to discipline: for instance, they readily submit to vaccination.

At first a special quarter had been assigned to them. In this reserved quarter, contractors had built them houses adapted to their customs. The Chinese, as a matter of fact, do not require separate and spacious rooms such as we use; they huddle together in a narrow space; room sufficient for two or three Europeans would suffice for thirty or forty Chinese. This promiscuous way of living has a fatal effect upon their morals; and this agglomeration is equally detrimental to their health. It constitutes a real danger

[1] See the report of the committee of inquiry deputed to investigate this matter at Hong-Kong in 1880, notably the document entitled: Correspondence respecting the alleged existence of Chinese slavery in Hong-Kong (March 1882, C. 3185).

for public morals and public health. At last, owing to the continuous increase in their numbers, the quarter reserved to them became too confined, and they overflowed into the European quarter. Naturally, they imported, too, their mode of living. As this was by no means agreeable to the English, a law of 1889 ordained that the Chinese settling in the European quarters must conform to European usages.

We may add that a certain number of them have already borrowed from the Europeans their manners and customs, and also share in their riches.

For many are wealthy; some even immensely so. The Chinaman has, in fact, at Hong-Kong as elsewhere, proved himself to be a merchant that has no equal. As a general rule, he begins in a humble way. In his own country, a poor wretch with prospects the reverse of encouraging from a social point of view, he resolved to emigrate. Landing destitute of everything, he engages himself as coolie. Soon the coolie becomes a pedlar, then the pedlar opens a shop on his own account. He mixes—as far as possible—with Europeans; while acting as their intermediary he studies their system of business; he makes money, becomes a partner in a European firm, and at length, by economy and fortunate speculations—for nowhere can be found a more determined

or daring gamester—he is able to become the sole proprietor of the business. More than one palace of the earlier "merchant princes" at the present day belongs to him alone; with his capital alone more than one large firm exists. But, being less pretentious and more able than we, he carries on the firm in the name under which it attained its present prosperity. He lays less store on appearances than on the reality of his power. He only makes a display at home, in the interior of his dwelling, and in his mode of living. There we can find him with a capacious paunch, sumptuous apparel, a delicate palate, and an unrivalled cook.

The British who see them growing in wealth at their side and even surpassing them [1] are not, however, astonished or disquieted thereby. They calculate that without them—at any rate, so far—the Chinese could accomplish nothing, and they enjoy, in peace and without any mental reservation, the enviable position which they owe to their energy, their enterprise, and their system of government.

[1] In 1876, amongst the largest tax-payers, there were 12 Europeans (British, American, Portuguese) and 8 Chinese. The 12 Europeans paid 62,523 dollars; the 8 Chinese, 28,267 dollars.

In 1881, the twenty largest tax-payers comprised only 3 Europeans as against 17 Chinese. The 3 Europeans paid 16,038 dollars, and the 17 Chinese, 99,110 dollars.

CHAPTER VI.

Methods of Government and Administration—The European Colonists—Population—Hygiene—Health.

NEXT to the Chinese, Europeans were to be attracted to Hong-Kong, for the Europeans were just as indispensable as the Chinese. At the outset of this commercial strife, the Chinese were to constitute what soldiers and fuglemen are to an army; whilst the British were to represent the officers and Staff. The Chinese supplied the manual labour and furnished the primary information as to the ways and means to be adopted; and the British brought the capital together with critical judgment and energy.

The commerce of this country had two aspects: one looking towards China, the other towards Europe. With China the British—at least at this epoch—could accomplish little without the Chinese; with

Europe the Chinese could accomplish nothing without the British. And to-day, after 50 years of mutual contact and tuition, their respective positions remain much the same: the British cannot yet altogether dispense with the Chinese; and the Chinese are well aware that without the British they would be helpless, unless they undertook a series of experiments, so tedious and costly as to make them hesitate.

That it was necessary to attract colonists to a colony which had been acquired on their behalf, is so self-evident as to be almost naïve. It is so, however, only in appearance: there are numerous colonies which remain uncolonised, and the way to attract colonists, and better still, to retain them, is one of the most complicated and interesting problems which can occupy the mind of a statesman.

Here the problem was, perhaps, more complex than elsewhere. For the class of colonists needed was a select one: men of initiative and enterprise, who would doubtless have an eye to profit, but whose present income relieved them of any anxiety as to their daily bread. They were to be capitalists, or at any rate men backed up by capitalists; men who could take the lead, and who would be capable, not indeed of competing with the Chinese—that would

have been a ruinous piece of folly—but of utilising them for their own profit. British commerce has a plentiful supply of men of this stamp, and even at that time there was no lack of them. But the notion of dragging them from Liverpool, Aberdeen, or Calcutta, and planting them at Hong-Kong was rather a bold one. And its boldness becomes all the more apparent when it is considered that, as a matter of fact, it was not a question of *planting* them there at all. For the European—at least up till now—has been unable to perpetuate his race in these latitudes. His children are with difficulty reared there, and he usually makes arrangements for their birth to take place in Europe.

Under these circumstances, the colonist is a mere bird of passage. He can scarcely, and in fact does not, dream of working or founding a business for his children. His age on arrival is from 20 to 25, on reaching 40 or 50, he disposes of his business to others, and returns to Europe. And it is this bird of passage, with but a limited number of years before him, who is expected—from whom the very nature of things exacts—far-reaching enterprises, long-dated engagements, at times even lofty conceptions. This was the type of colonist with whom it was proposed to people Hong-Kong. The

idea appears chimerical.[1] But the more complicated the problem, the more interesting it becomes, the more praiseworthy its solution, and the more profitable its study.

The British Government had assuredly neither foreseen the problem, nor provided for its solution. But when confronted with it, it had—a merit of extreme rarity—the

[1] The population of Hong-Kong rose, in 1891, to 221,441: of whom 210,995 were Chinese, 8,545 Europeans and Americans including the garrison, and 1,901 inhabitants who were neither Europeans nor Chinese. In 1881, these various elements numbered respectively:, 150,690, 7,990, and 1,722.

Out of the 210,955 Chinese, 126,000 inhabit the town of Victoria, the rest live in the country or on their boats (especially the latter.)

The 8,545 Europeans and Americans comprise 1,448 British permanently residing at Hong-Kong. In 1885 the latter numbered only 785. These 1,448 residents comprise 785 men, compared with 336 in 1881, 300 women as against 165, 159 boys as against 144, and 194 girls as against 144. The proportion of the women to the men has not kept pace with the increase in the population. In 1881, there were 47 women to every 100 men; now, there are only 37 to every 100. Amongst the other European communities which are composed principally of Americans and of Portuguese, there were, in 1881, 82 women to 100 men; now, there are only 71. The Portuguese is the only community which has a proportion of 136 women to 100 men. The climate of Hong-Kong has not deterred them from coming. The English wives who are so courageous have been distanced. But, that they have been surpassed by the American and Portuguese women, is less dangerous for their reputation than for the morals of their husbands.

courage to face it and to endeavour to solve it.

It is possible by a timely and judicious course of action, to transform a weakly and ungainly girl into a healthy and graceful maiden, who will not only find a suitor, but will have a host of suitors contending for her favour. And so Hong-Kong, an unhealthy island and a deserted rock, by prompt and judicious initiative could be transformed into a charming spot and a populous town, whither colonists would resort and where, once come, they would settle. What was necessary to achieve this? To ensure the arrival of colonists, existence there must first be rendered possible; to ensure their remaining, there must be attractions which would rival those of Europe, that is to say, it should afford them the opportunity o enriching themselves and at the same time enlist their interest. And the British have known how to accomplish this.

During the earlier years of the occupation nearly £80,000 were expended on Public Works; and considerable sums are devoted to this object each succeeding year. Not but that a host of abuses may be chronicled in regard to these works. In one of the latest debates in the Legislative Council, a member distributed the following significant tabular statement:

PUBLIC WORKS BUDGET.

YEAR.	Establishment.	Public Works. Ordinary expenditure.
1887	547,650 dollars.	49,402 dollars.
1888	552,875 ,,	62,336 ,,
1889	602,183 ,,	58,139 ,,
1890	655,233 ,,	75,530 ,,
1891	758,139 ,,	90,806 ,,

Thus in the ordinary budget the *employés* cost eight to ten times as much as the public works. But what may be termed the extraordinary budget—derived from the sale of land, loans, and surplus receipts—is almost entirely devoted to public works, such as roads, a funicular railway, and especially hygienic works.

Hong-Kong was exposed to three scourges: typhoons, rains and fever. As a safeguard against the typhoons, quays of unusual solidity, and the breakwaters at Causeway Bay were constructed; as a protection against the rains, the declivities were staked, and channels were cut for the water; as a preventative against fever, the swamps and stagnant pools were drained, the houses were built on piles, drains were laid down, a perfected system of sewerage instituted and, above all, an inexhaustible [1] supply of water,

[1] Or ought, at least, to be so. But it is not certain that the works connected with the reservoirs of Tytam

involving a large outlay, was secured: the reservoirs of Hong-Kong are an admirable piece of work, and the water stored therein is so wholesome and agreeable, that it is exported in bottles to places distant a ten days' journey.

This work of sanitary improvements, which, however, it must be remarked, was not undertaken with any degree of continuity until many years later, has been attended by good results. We have seen what the mortality was from 1842 to 1846. In 1849, in a garrison of 1,500 to 1,600 men, 120 died within a few months; in 1851, the number of deaths amongst the troops in garrison was 76; in 1852, 58; in 1853, 56. And so it continued, at an average rate of 4 to 6%. The year 1865 was a calamitous one. An epidemic of a species of yellow fever broke out. The second battalion of the 9th regiment numbering 835 men, lost 95 through it, and, in addition, 115 had to be placed on the sick-list; the second battalion of the 11th regiment, 716 strong, lost 94 through it, and 162 more were invalided. It was then *i. e.,* after 23 years of occupation, that the construction of the necessary

and Pokefulum were executed as conscientiously as could be wished, or that they insure a supply of water to the town proportionately large to justify the sums expended on them.

additions to barracks and hospitals was decided on. The existing barracks could only accommodate 1,360 men, whereas the garrison always numbered over 1,500 men, more than 50 of whom were married; the military hospital had accommodation for 150 sick persons, but the number admitted was 180 to 200. Since the enlargement of the barracks and hospitals, there has been a marked decrease in the mortality.

In regard to hygiene and health it is impossible to compare the condition of the colonists with that of the troops. The hygienic condition of the soldier is abominable, he is imprudent and of doubtful sobriety; he is badly housed, and is obliged to perform duties which are occasionally very troublesome, notably the night-watches which are dangerous in these latitudes. The colonist—we refer to the colonist of Hong-Kong—is usually exempt from these disadvantages. And yet, during the period extending from 1842 to 1865, the average mortality amongst the colonists was no less than 5%. In 1860, it was 3.20%, and in 1862, 2.24; but in 1863 it reached 6.32, in 1859, 6.66, and in 1858, 7.51%. Subsequent to 1866, it has continuously decreased; since 1868 the rate has been 2%, and since 1875, on the average, 2.42, the lowest being 1.80 in 1882, and the highest 3.09 in 1884.

In addition to this, it may be mentioned that since 1850, and especially since 1866, the sanitary condition of the colonists or of the troops has not been a subject for anxiety or argument either in the colony itself or in the mother-country. People have made up their minds to the inevitable. It is, as it were, taken for granted that the death-rate there must be from 2 to 3 %. Nevertheless, both the colonists and the local Government are making most praiseworthy efforts to ameliorate the sanitary condition of the colony, and one is entitled to hope that a number of works such as a perfected system of drainage, a rigorous inspection of unwholesome dwellings, a water-supply which, owing to the continual enlargement of the reservoirs and a better system of filtration, is constantly improving both in quantity and quality, will render Hong-Kong, in spite of its tropical situation, a healthy place of residence.[1]

Add to this that, notwithstanding a temperature which is frequently excessive, it is, at least for the traveller who spends a few days there, one of the most agreeable resorts in the world, and you may imagine what it owes to its administrators.

[1] See, however, a communication made to the *Royal Meteorological Society* in 1890 by Mr William Doberick, which places Hong-Kong and its climate in an anything but favourable light.

CHAPTER VII.

Methods of Government and of Administration—Regime in the British Colonies—Liberty and its degrees—The Officials—The Executive.

THE system of government, and of the executive administration at Hong-Kong, has in itself nothing which can at first sight attract attention, still less excite admiration. Any one of our legislators would have been quite competent to draw up on paper, an equally well-arranged and more logical plan of administration. But the system which has been in force for fifty years, has insured, or, at any rate,—which is still a high encomium—not impeded the prosperity of the colony: on this account it deserves to be studied, and studied moreover,—since one is often inclined to exaggerate merit, and to draw final inferences from an idea,—both with reference to what it has and what it lacks, what its originators have desired to do, and what they have declined to do.

The British colonies may be divided into three categories: 1. The Crown colonies, which are subject, as an English writer has remarked, to the meddlesome despotism of of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and to which the Home Government supplies laws and officials: the island of Ceylon is one of this class. 2. The colonies which possess representative institutions, but not a responsible Government, the Home Government reserving the right of vetoing legislative measures, and of appointing public functionaries: the colony of Barbadoes belongs to this category. Thirdly and lastly, the colonies which have both representative institutions, and a responsible Government which fills up all appointments, the Home Government merely reserving the right of vetoing legislative measures (a right which it rarely exercises), and of nominating the Governor: Canada is a colony of this class.

Hong-Kong belongs to the first order, and for this reason: the British have not arbitrarily instituted these categories, nor have they arbitrarily classified their various colonies; they have allowed themselves to be guided by a leading principle which may be reduced to the following essential proposition: the independence and autonomy of a colony shall be in proportion to the possible, and probable discretion of its colonists.

There are a number of obstacles with which this same discretion may come into collision; the most frequent and most dangerous one of all is, a conflict between the interests of the colonists and other interests, including such as are usually opposed to theirs, by which I mean the interests of the native inhabitants of the colony. It is not to be expected that men animated by a spirit of gain—and colonists are men of this type—should possess sufficient inherent equity and moral fortitude to enable them to prefer the interests of the native inhabitants to their own, or even to wish to conciliate them. Thus, whenever a colony contains a minority of Europeans, the Home Government, in the interests of justice and civilisation, as well as in its own interests (for it is in reality answerable to the natives) is compelled to take the reins of Government into its own hands. And this is how matters stand with regard to Hong-Kong.

Then, if this principle be admitted—a principle which, from another point of view, is defective, for it implies the administration from afar of countries of which the Government has but an imperfect knowledge,—it is amended by surrounding the administration of the colony by the Home Government with certain safeguards calculated to render it more enlightened and more efficient.

To commence with, good officials are placed at the head of affairs.

Good officials are a rare commodity anywhere. The British take infinite pains to attract them to their colonies. Certain of the rules which they have adopted for this purpose, and,—what is still more creditable —have adhered to, are well worth consideration.

The first rule is, that officials must not be selected hap-hazard. The first comer, the literary, commercial, or legal outcast must not be allowed entry into Government employ *de plano*. His admission must be dependent upon his passing certain prescribed tests.

The second is, that high positions such as that of the Head of Affairs, or Governor must not be accessible to persons of mere ordinary ability. The posts must be adapted to the talents of the individual. A copying clerk, a subordinate who has been accustomed to perform humble duties, and who for years past has occupied a post requiring but a small modicum of intelligence must not, by the mere ordinary routine of regular promotion, be entitled to succeed to a post requiring initiative and tact. Should there prove to be amongst the staff of officials individual members, who are qualified for promotion to a higher grade, they are

required to prove their capacity by passing the prescribed competitive examinations.

The third and not the least important rule is, that it is expedient to guarantee the supreme head of each colony full authority and perfect security. A Governor must be able to rely implicitly on his subordinates, nor have any occasion to fear the inclination to rebellion or the petty perfidy which undermine the position of a Chief, and finally render his supersession necessary. Consequently, on the one hand, all the authority centres in the Governor; and on the other, his immediate subordinates are but very rarely promoted to the rank he holds. They may possibly officiate *ad interim* as acting Governors, but long years must elapse and many changes take place ere they occupy his position. This restrains the ambitious, and keeps them up to the mark. Moreover, the post of Governor is frequently (though this is an expedient which is not devoid of danger) conferred on Members of Parliament.

Lastly, the fourth rule is, that in the Government Service, as elsewhere, suitable remuneration must be paid for services rendered. Officials employed in the British colonies are highly remunerated; their salaries are paid in good hard cash, and they are treated with every consideration. They receive

large salaries during their term of active service and liberal pensions on retirement.

Some particulars may suitably here be given regarding the competitive examinations, and the scale of emoluments, so far as they concern Hong-Kong.

The competitive examination [1] is based on a dual principle. Colonial officials are burdened with so many responsibilities and have to undergo so much fatigue that they must possess physical as well as moral and intellectual qualifications, combined with a thorough general education, and a large amount of technical knowledge.

Their physical qualifications are certified by a strict medical examination: only those candidates who possess sound and strong constitutions are passed.

Their moral qualifications are certified by a personal inquiry on the part of the Civil Service Commissioners.

Their intellectual qualifications are certified by a preliminary examination for admission, and by further examinations.

The object of the preliminary examination is to test their general knowledge; it is the ordinary test for the candidates termed *Eastern Cadets* who are intended for service at Hong-Kong, Singapore, or in Ceylon.

[1] See the remarks on this subject in *The British in Burma,* Part 2, Chapters VI and VII.

I have before me the examination papers of the last few years; they contain both compulsory and optional subjects. The compulsory subjects comprise latin translation and a latin exercise; either a Greek, French, German, or Italian translation and exercise; and lastly, English composition, and an essay on a given subject pertaining to administration. The optional subjects comprise any two of the following: namely, mathematics (pure and applied), geography, history, international law, political economy, geology, civil engineering, surveying, etc.

And let not the reader imagine that this examination is mere child's play. The papers set might, indeed, be apparently imposing while the actual tests were of a very modest nature. Such is not, however, the case. Here is an instance taken from the papers for 1890. The Greek translation is from Euripides; the French translation is from Leconte de l'Isle's *Le Rêve du Jaguar*. The English composition consists of an essay on one of the three following subjects: Great Trading Companies as Civilising Agents; the Social Ideal; Notoriety and Renown. And the essay on administration consisted of the following test: a Blue Book, containing 16 pages, on Central Asian affairs was placed before the candidates, and they were required to make, first of all, a

short abstract of each document, and then to give an outline of the matter treated of, not according to the order of the documents as given in the Blue Book, but in their logical sequence.

And so on with regard to the other sections. This examination may not inaptly be compared to that which our Foreign Office *attachés* have to pass. It is only the good scholars of our *École des Sciences Politiques* (School of Political Science) who could successfully face such an ordeal; the best pupils of our public-schools would be unequal to the task.

Having said so much in regard to general knowledge; let us now turn to the technical requirements.

The cadet, as soon as he has passed the preliminary examination, at once proceeds to the colony. He reports himself to the Governor who, it might be supposed from the regulations, would at once assign him a post in the Service, but who, in reality, directs him to proceed to Canton to learn the native language which is indispensable in towns, such as Hong-Kong or Singapore, containing a Chinese population, mostly natives of the provinces of Quang-Tung and Fo-Kien. This stage of his career varies in length and ends in an examination conducted by competent judges. Then, *and not*

till then, the cadet is declared duly qualified for service, which he enters upon as soon as a vacancy occurs.

These strict ordeals do not frighten away candidates. Every year they come forward in large numbers: in August 1888, 57 candidates competed for 9 appointments; in 1889, there were 61 candidates for 12 appointments; in 1890, 59 candidates for 6 appointments; in 1891, 49 candidates for 7 appointments.

Having said so much regarding the examination papers, let us proceed to consider the emoluments.

Every cadet, on admission, receives 1,500 dollars a year and, in addition to this, during his stay in China, an allowance for his lodging and for prosecuting his studies. On completing this course of study and being finally admitted into the Civil Service of the colony, he receives a provisional salary of 1,800 dollars, until such time as a regular appointment becomes vacant.

The salaries pertaining to the principal posts are as follows:

The Governor of Hong-Kong receives 32,000 dollars, or about £4,800; the Colonial Secretary, 9,700 dollars; the Chief Justice, $ 12,000; the Puisne Judge, $ 8,400; the Surveyor General, $ 5,300; the Attorney General, $ 7,800 (but he is prohibited to take

private practice;) the Registrar General, $ 6,800; the Police Magistrate, $ 6,066; the Harbour-master, $ 3,000; the Chief Conservator of Forests, $ 2,700: the Civil Surgeon, $ 4,800; the President of the Board of Health $ 2,400. In addition to their salary, many have free quarters provided them. Attention is also paid to a provision for their families: hence the institution of a *Widows' and Orphans' Fund.* Lastly, there is the prospect of a title for those that distinguish themselves. They arrive at Hong-Kong as plain Mr Davis, Mr Bonham, Mr Bowring, etc.; they leave as Sir John F. Davis, Sir George Bonham, Sir John Bowring. The most distinguished, on completing their term of office, are called to Her Majesty's Privy Council. Others obtain seats in Parliament, or reoccupy their seats (for many leave Parliament to take up colonial appointments), and there they prove of great service in exercising a competent and temperate control over colonial affairs.

When once they are 'selected' and classified on account of their merit, confidence is placed in this merit. A certain amount of latitude is allowed them; they are, moreover, supported, encouraged, and kept in their place. Hong-Kong, since 1841, has had nineteen Governors: this is an average of two years and eight months for each of

them. And, in these latitudes, everybody is agreed in fixing three years as the maximum term of residence for a European.

The powers vested in the Governor are very considerable: he nominates various officials, the ordinary judges, and the justices of the peace; he has the right of suspending any one of his subordinates; he possesses the prerogative of mercy; during his term of office he bears the title and exercises the powers, of a vice-admiral; is president of the Executive Council, and nominates, provisionally, the members of the Legislative Council, etc., etc.

The collateral existence of a Governor of Hong-Kong and of Executive and Legislative Councils may appear inconsistent with the expressed desire of the Home Government to govern colonies of this class by its own officials, and with its own laws. This seeming inconsistency is, however, merely on the surface; for the duty of the Councils is, literally, only to counsel and enlighten the Government, which far from fearing any encroachment on its absolute authority, endeavours to modify the same, so as to render it thereby acceptable and beneficent.

The Executive Council is composed of the Governor, the Commander-in-Chief, the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General, and of such other official heads of depart-

ments whom the Governor may be pleased to appoint: such as, the Treasurer, Surveyor-General, Commissioner of Police. Its sittings are not public. The Governor presides: he is bound to consult the Executive Council on all affairs of importance, but not necessarily to follow its advice. Should any influential member of this Council persist in maintaining an opinion with which the Governor as persistently disagrees, it is customary—a custom which is excellent in principle, but sometimes troublesome in practice, and to which there is now, apparently, a tendency to make excessive sacrifices—to forward an impartial statement of the two adverse opinions to London, and to await the Secretary of State's decision thereon.

The Legislative Council exercises more important functions. The British Parliament passes laws which are applicable generally to all the colonies, but abstains, as a rule, from legislating on special matters which require local investigation.[1] Such matters come within the province of the Legislative Council. The Governor alone can introduce new laws; in reality, the members of Council can usually secure his approval of

[1] Recently, the repeal by the House of Commons of an Infectious Diseases Act applicable to Hong-Kong, proved the inconvenience of making laws on the banks of the Thames for a country 2,000 leagues off.

measures which appear to them desirable. The sittings of the Council are public, excepting during the *debate* on the Budget. All votes are recorded publicly. The Council debates measures; and the Governor has the casting vote. A measure passed by the Council immediately becomes law, but is only put in force under reservation of the Royal sanction, and is sometimes not even promulgated until such sanction has been actually obtained.

The Legislative Council of Hong-Kong, at the present moment, is composed of two classes of members, between whom harmony does not always exist: the official and the non-official members. The official members comprise: the Governor, who presides, the Chief Justice, the Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General, and three other officers appointed by the Governor. The non-official members are five in number: three, one of whom is a Chinaman, are directly nominated by the Governor; the other two are elected, one by the Justices of the Peace in a body, the other by the Chamber of Commerce, all five being subject to the Royal approval. Their term of office lasts six years. In the Legislative Council the Governor has the greatest influence, and his opinion, moreover, invariably prevails, as the official members are bound to side with him,

or to resign. But here again custom acts as a palliative: the Governor usually forwards the minutes setting forth the views of the dissentient members to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the Queen, when made acquainted with the full facts of the case, can either refuse or accord her sanction to the measure.

These arrangements, which—at first sight, merely, for practice gainsays this opinion—may appear not particularly liberal, represent, nevertheless, a recent and considerable advance on the state of affairs inaugurated in 1843. According to the constitution of the 5th April 1843, the Legislative Council was to be composed of the Governor, and of such other persons, official or otherwise, residing in the colony, whom the Queen might be pleased to appoint; their term of office being likewise dependent on Her Majesty's pleasure. For a long time it was customary to nominate five officials and two colonists as members of this Council. In 1849 or 1850, the Governor, Sir G. Bonham, proposed to add to these a few new members, both colonists and officials; however, nothing came of this. In 1855, his successor, Sir J. Bowring, again took up this proposal in another form which is worthy of mention.

In a letter to Lord John Russell of the 2nd April 1855, he proposed a reorganisa-

tion of the Legislative Council on a more extended basis. Six other members were to be added to the existing seven members, three official and three elected members. This would have made a total of thirteen members: the Governor, seven officials, and five colonists. The five colonists were to be elected from among Her Majesty's subjects, by a body of electors composed of the lessees of Crown lands paying a rent of £10 and upwards. This represented a total of 1,999 electors: 186 British, 176 other Europeans and Americans, and 1,637 Chinese. This was considered a dangerous measure, and its adoption negatived.[1] It was not until the year 1883 that the Legislative Council was enlarged, and modified.

At the time of this reconstitution on a far smaller basis than had been proposed in 1857, a very interesting exchange of views took place between the Governor, Sir J. Bowen, and the Secretary of State, Lord Derby.

Sir J. Bowen wished to increase the number of members in the Executive Council from five to seven, and at the same time to augment the number of members composing the Legislative Council. He wished the latter to consist of six non-official and two new official members, one of these last

[1] See Blue Book, No. 101, of 12th June 1857.

being the Commander-in-Chief of the forces. The Commander-in-Chief was already a member of the Executive Council, and he wished him also to take his place in the Legislative Council. Lord Derby refused his assent to this arrangement. "The chief reason for my decision," he wrote on the 7th August 1883, "is that the Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's military forces is not bound to the same extent as civilian officers, to support the measures proposed by the Government. If he felt conscientiously bound to speak, or to vote, against any one of these measures, the opposition of an officer of such high rank could not fail to have a distressing influence. It therefore appears to me desirable that the Colonial Government should have the advice of the Commander-in-Chief in the Executive Council, but that he should not be called upon to take part in the debates of the Legislative Council."

The above is a rough sketch of the institutions of the colony of Hong-Kong. It is difficult to note everything in so cursory a review; and still harder to comment thereon by placing side by side one's reasons for approval or disapproval, for praise or blame. Perfection exists no more at Hong-Kong than it does anywhere else. Amongst the officials whom I have praised, can be found men of poor ability, and even some who are ab-

solutely despicable.[1] Incapable and unfaithful officials are not wanting: chiefs who are not loyal to their subordinates, subordinates who betray their chiefs, who denounce them to the higher authorities, and even communicate, without the knowledge of the latter, directly with the Home Government.[2]

At other times, the Home Government itself is to blame. It insists on its own wishes being carried out, and pretends to govern directly, even down to the minutest matters of detail, a country 2000 leagues away. It occasionally mistreats its best servants, by imposing on them, through a spirit of niggardly economy, tasks far above their strength, or by removing them without sufficient reason, and introduces men of inexperience into a service, the knowledge of which is so difficult to thoroughly grasp. But these defects and imperfections must not be permitted to exercise an undue influence over our judgment, and to blind us to the wonderfully successful results obtained by active organisation, which we shall proceed to relate.

[1] Cf. for instance, Blue Books No. 161 of 1860; No. 427 of 1862; No. 113 of 1863. Cf. the fact that in 1892, a very severe measure was adopted against the officials: they were all absolutely forbidden to purchase Crown lands. This measure, though probably excessive, in its general bearing, is, however, none the less significant.

[2] Cf. notably the *Report* for the year 1882, C. 1218, p. 275.

[3] Cf. the same *Report*, p. 278.

CHAPTER VIII.

Methods of Administration—Trade—Finance.

A COLONY, to which its founders have succeeded in attracting labour (and what labour! abundant, skilled, disciplinable), and merchants (what merchants, too! men of capital, daring and endurance), cannot fail to prosper, provided the Government interposes no obstacle to its prosperity.

Governments are imbued with two ideas, both of them inaccurate in their premises, and false in their conclusions. The one is, that they are full of wisdom and intelligence; that it is through these very qualities that they can lay claim to their power; that they, being the Government, must perforce know how to govern better than any one else, and ought, in fact, to govern everything, even what by nature or situation is beyond their control. The other idea is, that being the trustees of the national property, they are responsible for the success of its enterprises;

that, their term of existence being short, they must achieve an immediate success, and that, if no results are achieved (during their term of office), the enterprise must necessarily be a bad one, for which the only remaining alternative is liquidation.

With such notions, a Government may, and indeed must, be led into a policy which is, as a rule, blundering, inconsistent, and deceptive. It will set up a claim to govern from afar, and that too despotically; to suggest a general system of government and to supervise all details; to invest State funds and create a frequently factitious activity, thus inducing private capital to follow its lead; to actuate and even direct those engaged in mercantile pursuits, and to impose upon them protective and embarrassing regulations; or again to get rich with them and sometimes at their expense: later on, it will even claim competition with them, and reserve to itself the more profitable transactions. On the other hand, if its finances are at a low ebb, it will levy from the colony excessive contributions, or will refuse to give the latter public works and the indispensable equipment, etc., etc. Between these two kinds of excess, the colony runs the risk of being ruined.

The British Government did not avoid all these faults with regard to Hong-Kong. Yet,

it understood how to solve complicated problems: such as, allowing the colony time for growth without haggling too much over the sacrifices entailed; granting the colonists and merchants sufficient freedom of action, and aiding their initiative without supplying or suppressing it; executing the necessary public works without taking on itself the whole burden; establishing the public finances on a satisfactory footing without overtaxing the rate-payers: in a word, associating the fortune of the colony with that of the mother country, and the prosperity of the colonists with that of the colony, without sacrificing or bringing into conflict opposite interests.

That trade would be the important factor of Hong-Kong's prosperity was known to us beforehand. A market had been looked for which would serve as a common *rendez-vous* for European and Chinese merchants and their wares, and for this purpose Hong-Kong had been selected; the important point was then to adapt it to the part it was to play. This adaptation was merely a question of equipment. Beyond that, nothing could be done.

The remark has often been made—though not often enough—that trade, in order to flourish, has no need of a Government capable of great efforts of imagination, or

lavish of expenditure, but, on the contrary, requires a minimum of intervention. Doubtless it requires security (which Government alone can insure); doubtless it requires equipment, means of transport and correspondence, exchange and payment (all of which are supplied more efficiently, and at a lower rate, by private initiative than through any other source); but, when once it has these first necessities and essential factors, what is especially requisite, is freedom of action. No excessively prudent regulations, no over-anxious precautions: these only impede and frustrate the development of trade which asks for nothing but the free exercise of its faculties.

The British understood this, and it is certainly not very wonderful that they did so, though we cannot but admire them for it. Hong-Kong had cost, and still continued to cost them very dear; twenty years after its acquisition, it did not pay its expenses. When at last there came a turning-point in its career, it might have occurred to some, as a justifiable and rational measure, to impose an import-duty, for instance, on all goods entering the port, whether shipped from Europe or Asia. This was not done. At the outset, Hong-Kong had been proclaimed a free port, and in spite of a long series of vexa-

tions,[1] in spite of the narrow circumstances prevailing, at one time in the mother country, and at another in the colony, the resolution originally adopted was persistently adhered to. To-day, it is very evident that this perseverance was the right course, and that, if Hong-Kong was to become a port of distribution and an important place of transit, the gates must be thrown open on both sides. But this has not always been equally apparent, and more than one nation might be mentioned which, after acquiring what are called commercial routes, has, notwithstanding this example, made it its immediate care to erect a barrier at the entrance to the route and another at its exit.

At Hong-Kong a happy distinction between the departments belonging to State and those belonging to private individuals, was arrived at from the first.

[1] The port of Hong-Kong is not a model of convenience; vessels cannot come alongside the quay, but all operations have to be conducted in the roadstead, by means of lighters. But anchorage is gratuitous; pilotage is optional, and the light-house and buoying dues are very moderate (1 cent, 0 fr. 10 per ton.) The narrow straits leading to Hong-Kong are well lighted. New beacons have been erected (Cape Rock) and others are contemplated (Waglan). As a compensation for the expenses which they have necessitated, the Government levies beacon dues. But, in the Legislative Council, the non-official members have often stated that the levy of these dues will cease as soon as the cost of the works has been recouped.

The island of Hong-Kong posesses a port, and a capital. The town must of necessity be maintained in a healthy condition: its sanitation concerns the Government; the port must have an adequate equipment: the equipment regards the merchants. The hygienic works, the canals and reservoirs, the sewers and drainage, are entrusted to the vigilance and care of the Executive; the management of the forests, the docks, the quays, the reclamation of lands, are all matters, the planning and execution of which, devolve on the colonists alone. Theirs to promote, to study, to direct, to reap the profit and, under adverse circumstances, to bear the loss.

Not that these responsibilities in any way dismay them. Far from dreaming of sheltering themselves behind the authority of the Government, they prefer to manage their own affairs and to settle their difficulties without its interference. A few years ago complaints were made at Hong-Kong, about the organisation of bill- and stock-brokers. With a view to get rid of the black sheep, the idea was originated of making the exercise of their profession subject to a high license-tax. The Chamber of Commerce, when consulted on the subject, admitted that a license-tax would doubtless have the effect of purging the corporation. "Yet,"

in the words of an official report, "it deprecated any legal intervention in the conduct of private affairs, fearing that legal measures would never be sufficiently elastic to meet the varied requirements of Exchange operations."

On the other hand, in cases where private persons are powerless, they can depend upon Government intervention on their behalf. The colonists of Hong-Kong have one main object: that of doing as large a business as possible with China; the British Government spontaneously exerts itself to gain them admission to the Chinese markets, and to facilitate their access to the more remote provinces. And, in order that they may succeed in their endeavours, the Governor of Hong-Kong and the British Minister to the Court of Pekin enter into a close alliance. Success does not always crown their efforts; but whether the question be that of securing the assessment of the quota of duty called *likin*, of determining the effect of the *transit passes*, or of getting the Yang-Tse thrown open to European navigation as far as Chunking, the foresight with which the negotiations are usually [1] initiated,

[1] I say "usually", because certain diplomatists, among them the last minister at Pekin, Sir John Walsham, have given rise to many complaints amongst the merchants of Hong-Kong."

and the pertinacity with which they are conducted throughout, defy criticism.

It is the combination of so many fortunate circumstances, the liberal spirit of its institutions, the constant anxiety of the Government to afford the colonists entire liberty of action and energetic support, which has by degrees attracted to Hong-Kong a nucleus of merchants who, in skill and good fortune, may have their equals in London or Shanghai, but who are nowhere surpassed. It may be objected to them—especially of late years—that, on the strength of their good fortune, they have become so daring as almost to be called rash, and sanguine even to the extent of speculation; but none know better than they how to manipulate credit, make money circulate, and do a brisk business.

There is no place where what is called personal credit, that is to say, credit obtained not so much on the security of a man's property—the creditor's safeguard—as on the strength of his good address and his talents, can be more readily obtained than at Hong-Kong; and as to business transactions, they are completed so rapidly, that a statistical record of them would be impossible.[1]

[1] "Sir J. Pope Hennessey had thought of establishing at Hong-Kong a statistical bureau for imports, as at

Prosperous finance must naturally be the outcome of prosperous trade. And yet, the financial task of the Hong-Kong Government was still one of difficulty.

In the organisation and management of colonial finance, problems are met with, which vary considerably in importance, but which are all worthy of the attention of statesmen or experts. A colony, as we have said, but may here repeat with advantage, so ill-appreciated is this truth, is a long-dated investment; it yields no return for some thirty or forty years, and thus cannot pay for anything. All the cost of its maintenance, all the expenses of its first establishment fall of necessity on the mother country. And a first problem suggests itself: When will the sacrifices entailed on the mother country come to an end? When will the period of nursing terminate? When will the voracious nursling be in a fit state to be weaned?

The danger is, that the mother may tire too soon of her offspring. All colonies have, in the course of their existence, a phase, during which the mother country is doubt-

Singapore, which is likewise a free port. But it seems that it is extremely difficult to obtain exact figures, on account of the rapidity with which vessels arrive at, and leave the colony; they leave the roadstead before there has been time to deposit at the harbour-master's office complete copies of their manifests." (Extract from a 'Consular Report' of 15th May 1878.)

ful as to their success; all are exposed to the risk of the indispensable grant-in-aid being prematurely withdrawn, or even of having taxes imposed on them which they are unable to bear. Their fortunes may be represented by means of a curve: there is a moment which we may call the turning point, when the curve having reached the extreme limit of its declivity, ceases to descend and has not yet begun to ascend: nothing must be demanded from a colony, until this point has been reached and left behind.

On the other hand, from the moment that this point is reached, the colony is bound to contribute to the cost of its maintenance, until such time as it can be in a position to defray the whole amount. And this second rule is as important as the first, and is founded, moreover, on precisely the same basis. The work of colonisation, unlike that of evangelising, is by no means disinterested. Every nation founding a colony has in view present or future pecuniary or political advantages. Whether these be increase of wealth or of influence, greater national power, or the spread of the race, matters little. It works with a view to remuneration, and, to prevent regret and discouragement, this remuneration must be adequate and not prove too long in coming. Failing this,

the enterprise will be discredited in the eyes of Authorities, and the very principle under which the colonisation was carried out, will run the risk of being condemned.

But more than one danger has to be faced in applying these two rules, and in reconciling these two needs. The mother country, being as a rule pressed for money, will be inclined prematurely to require the colony to be responsible for the cost of its government and administration; the colony, forgetful of its obligations to the parent, and still feeling the effects of a difficult *début*, will do its best to live for a long while to come at the latter's expense. True it is, that there exists an intermediary between the two, whose business it is to reconcile their divergent views, viz., the Governor; but in the majority of cases, the Governor can be compared to the ambassador, who in his desire to please the Court to which he is accredited, betrays unconsciously the interests of his Government, and conspires against it with the very people he has been sent to.

After this primary difficulty, come others of secondary importance. What class of taxes is preferable? Which will prove the least burdensome to the colonists? How are the Treasury coffers to be filled without impoverishing the rate-payers? No sub-

ject can be met with, that requires more careful treatment.

This difficulty is all the greater in a colony like Hong-Kong, which in addition to its European colonists, contains an immense majority of Chinese, who are so changeable in their proceedings, so easily attracted, but so easily repelled. What limits ought to be fixed to the taxes imposed upon them? They are men who possess discrimination in administrative matters, and a remarkable perception of the legitimacy of taxing; at the same time they are the most subtle and most clear-sighted men of business on the face of the earth, and perceive at once the difference between taxes that are bearable, and those that will prove ruinous. As a result of this quick perception, they flock to the shelter of a well-ordered Government; but as soon as fiscal exactions appear excessive, take their flight in equally large numbers.

Numbers of instances might be given to prove this fact.

The British have not always been so happily inspired in this department of their government as in others. And if we wished to find useful examples bearing upon this subject, it would not, perhaps, be in Hong-Kong, but in other British Colonies, that we should have to look for them. However,

even Hong-Kong, as a rule, affords evidence of wisdom on the part of the British.

We cannot enter into further detail with regard to their organisation, and shall confine ourselves to a record of the results they have obtained.

CHAPTER IX.

Results:—The Budget—Commerce—Banks—Joint-stock Companies—Life of the Colonists.

THE finances of Hong-Kong were for a lengthy period in a state of mediocrity. For a long while the occupation of the colony was a heavy burden on the mother country. The expenditure, entitled civil, had risen during the first fourteen years to a total of £273,000, or an average of £20,000 per annum. Considerable at the outset (£49,000 in 1845), it had been reduced to £36,900 in 1846 and, little by little, to £15,500 in 1851; but these reductions were effected by the stoppage of almost all public works.

The military expenditure was still greater. In the earlier years it had reached, or exceeded, £200,000; in 1847, it still amounted to £115,000; in 1851 it had been reduced to £52,000. The revenues of the colony were insignificant and a long way below the current expenditure. In 1855, there was, indeed, a surplus of £7,000 (£47,000 as

against £40,000,) but this was an exceptional year, and it was not until 1860 that the revenue exceeded the expenditure, with any degree of regularity. The revenue of the colony could only just cover the ordinary Civil Service budget. Up to the present day the military expenses are still borne by the mother country, though, since 1886, the colony has paid an annual contribution thereto of £20,000, which there is even a talk of increasing, and of late years has also devoted considerable sums to defensive works and armaments. To meet this expenditure, it has contracted a loan of £200,000. Prior to this, the colony had no debt. Provision is made annually in the budget for a sum of £7,072, which is to be applied to the payment of interest on the loan, and to the formation of a sinking-fund for its projected repayment in 1907.

Table of receipts and disbursements.[1]

[1] These figures are not strictly reliable, for the following reasons:

In those of the earlier years the civil expenditure is frequently put down with the military. Thus, in 1846 the above table gives the sum of £60,000 as the civil expenditure, whereas another document (cf. the text of page 125) estimates it at merely £36,900.

In the figures for the later years, even for the most recent, the English statistics differ one from the other. Thus the 'Colonial List' gives $ 1,367,997 as the amount of revenue for 1886; and the Governor's 'Annual Report' gives the same amount, but he adds thereto $ 34,737

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.
1845 . . .	£ 22,242	£ 66,172
1846 . . .	,, 27,000	,, 60,000
1856 . . .	,, 35,000	,, 42,000
1866 . . .	,, 163,000	,, 196,000
1867 . . .	,, 179,000	,, 153,000
1868 . . .	,, 236,000	,, 206,500
1869 . . .	,, 192,500	,, 192,300
1870 . . .	,, 190,600	,, 182,750
1871 . . .	,, 176,000	,, 186,500
1872 . . .	,, 173,000	,, 174,600
1873 . . .	,, 176,600	,, 165,100
1874 . . .	,, 178,100	,, 192,400
1875 . . .	,, 187,000	,, 181,400
1876 . . .	,, 184,400	,, 187,600
1886 . . .	$ 1,367,997	$2,020,861 [1]

as having been realised by *premiums* on sales of land, of which the 'Colonial List' makes no mention. In 1887, the 'Colonial List' makes the amount $ 1,582,274, whilst the Governor only gives $ 1,427,485; the difference is caused by $ 155,238 realised by these same premiums, which the 'Colonial List' takes into account in 1887, but fails to mention in 1886.

On the other hand, the figures up to 1876, are given in pounds sterling, and subsequent to that year, in dollars. Now, the value of the dollar, during the last thirty years, has varied from 7 francs to fr.3.75. Under these circumstances the task of comparing the budgets of remote periods, though not an impossible, is at any rate a difficult one.

[1] These sums include the expenditure on extraordinary works of defence or of public hygiene, of the importance of which the following figures will give an idea: in 1884, $ 340,743; in 1885, $ 475,146; in 1886, $ 825,600; in 1887, $ 744,820; in 1888, $ 536,860; in

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.
1887 . . .	$1,582,724	$2,023,002
1888 . . .	,,1,717,969	,,1,992,330
1889 . . .	,,1,823,549	,,1,833,711
1890 . . .	,,1,995,220	,,1,915,350
1891 (Estimate)	,,1,952,098	,,1,674,780
1892 ,,	,,2,044,178	,,1,767,643

These are considerable sums. To them must be added the accumulated surpluses amounting, in 1891, to a total of $817,318, and which are applied to the construction of Public Works which may be termed extraordinary. These figures must not, however, delude us as to the financial prospects of the colony. That its finances are flourishing, is beyond a doubt; but it can be foreseen that they will ere long encounter formidable obstacles. Victoria is a free port, and the development of trade does not bring in a corresponding increase of revenue. On the contrary, the expenditure must be on the increase, and for two reasons: one, which is accidental, is that the legitimate satisfaction expressed by recent Governors, and especially by Sir William des Vœux, has given rise to the opinion in England, that the colony is richer than it really is, and the Home Government has consequent-

1890, nearly $400,000. This expenditure was defrayed by the accumulated budget-surpluses, and also by the loan of £200,000.

ly been induced to demand fresh sacrifices, notably for its defences; the other is, that the complicated and luxurious mode of living, the growing and multifarious wants of the Far-Eastern Colonist entail and impose upon the Government a style of living, if we may use the expression, which is daily becoming more extravagant.

Rapid and convenient ways of intercommunication; gardens, promenades, public monuments which require keeping in repair, and especially the works connected with public sanitation, are terribly dear to keep up. Now, the resources of the colony are not very elastic. Of indirect taxes, it has only the duty on opium, and alcohol, besides stamps and licenses. The remaining taxes are all direct: the public lighting, the police, water, house and ground rates: it is almost impossible to expand this class of taxation. Such imposts cannot be increased either in number or amount without running the risk of incurring serious inconveniences.[1]

[1] These imposts have risen, at the present day, to a tolerably high figure: notably that on houses exceeds 13% of the revenue. There is thus a very strong feeling in the colony that the present generation is too heavily taxed, and that future generations will reap the benefit accruing from the works executed by means of these imposts. Consequently, public opinion demands either a reduction, or, at any rate, a temporary cessation from increased taxation; it being held that public works

Of late years high rates have been levied on ground-plots. This is, however, a merely temporary and intermittent source of revenue, and cannot be continuously drawn upon without becoming exhausted. If, therefore, the wants of the colony continue to increase progressively, it cannot rely upon the sale of these ground-plots to provide it with a progressive increase of resources. This is a matter, which claims attention, though there is no cause for uneasiness.

The expansion of the trade of Hong-Kong has been marvellous. There being no Custom House and consequently no register, we cannot do more than estimate the amount. The progress made may, however, be guaged by the following figures: In 1843, the imports into Hong-Kong from Great Britain alone, represented a sum of £736,500; in 1853, after a succession of very prosperous years, this sum had gradually decreased by slow degrees to £378,000; in 1863, it had risen again to £1,473,000. In 1885, the sum total of Hong-Kong trade exceeded £40,000,000, the exact amount being £40,504,000.

Statistics show that this sum was made up of exports amounting to £18,635,181, and of imports amounting to £21,869,145.

of urgent importance should be carried out by means of a new loan.

But the expressions, exports and imports, are misleading. As Hong-Kong produces nothing, it cannot, properly speaking, export anything. Products are brought thither, from Europe, India, or China, and there await transmission to their final destination: hence the apparent imports and exports. Of this trade which exceeds £40,000,000, more than one-half, £24,000,000 (105 million Taels) is transacted with China, one-third with India, and the remainder with Europe.

The tonnage has reached considerably higher figures, so high, indeed, as to appear almost exaggerated. Vessels of all descriptions (steamers, sailing vessels, junks), of every nationality (British, European, Chinese), which entered the port of Hong-Kong during the year 1878, represented, according to the *Colonial List* a tonnage of 8,693,000; in 1883, 10,566,000; in 1887, 12,729,000; in 1890, 13,500,000 tons. The Governor's report, however, gives lower figures: in 1887, 4,078 vessels of 4,607,914 tons; 23,521 junks of 1,793,923 tons; total 6,401,837 tons; in 1888, 3,821 vessels with 4,536,442 tons; 23,958 junks with 1,863,968 tons; total, 6,400,410 tons. The compilers of the *Colonial List* specify in their list both ships entering and leaving the port; and this is the reason for their obtaining figures about double those of the Governor.

This method of calculation is, however, deceptive, for Hong-Kong is in no way a centre of production; it is a port of transit, and a *depôt* for merchandise. The greater number of ships entering the port only make a few hours' stay, and resume their voyage either to Europe or the East.

And this naturally leads us to the consideration of the causes which conduce to the prosperity of Hong-Kong.

Its prosperity cannot, so far at any rate, be attributed to industry properly so called, although it possesses a few sugar, rope, glass and other factories. The Governor, Sir Wm. des Vœux, in his last report expressed the opinion that Hong-Kong would become an industrial centre, which is by no means impossible. A country possessing an abundance of enterprising capital, skilled and docile labour, and which has coal within two days' journey, may certainly become an industrial centre. The raw material will, however, always be wanting; it could not be produced on the 29 square miles constituting the area of the island. Sugar-cane it will procure from Swatow and the surrounding country, from Quang-Tung or Tonking; cotton from India; rhea fibre from China, or Indo-China, and so forth. On the other hand, its 220,000 inhabitants will not, at any rate for a long while, afford it a sufficient market. Under

these circumstances, the question arises whether the purchase of raw material from other countries, its transport to Hong-Kong, and the re-shipment of the manufactured goods to foreign countries will leave a sufficient margin of profit. Well, these Hong-Kong people are industrious; if the thing can be done, they will do it.

Nor is the colony's prosperity to be attributed to local trade, and by 'local' must be understood business transacted either at Hong-Kong itself, or in neighbouring French or Spanish colonies. With these latter but little can be done, while at Hong-Kong the population, though considerable and increasing, is still too small. Of course, a *clientéle* numbering 220,000, nearly all of whom are earning fair salary and some even very wealthy, is not to be despised. But what explains easy circumstances does not account for wealth, and Hong-Kong is certainly wealthy.

The business of Hong-Kong is of two kinds: commission and financial transactions. On the one hand, the colonists of Hong-Kong act as intermediaries between Europe and China for a large number of articles; and, on the other, as bankers, furnishing capital to the merchants, manufacturers, or planters of the entire region.

Their foreign commercial transactions are

themselves of a two-fold nature. One class of business may be thus summarised: they purchase Oriental goods for shipment to Europe, and European goods for shipment to the East, especially to China: they undertake the sale of these goods at their own risk and peril, either bringing them to Hong-Kong and awaiting a favourable opportunity for their sale, or leaving them at the place of production and waiting till there is a demand for them. The other class of foreign business is as follows: They enter into business relations with vendors of Chinese products in Europe, and with vendors of European products in China, and supply one or other, for sale on commission, with these goods, which their knowledge of the markets and the centres of production enable them to procure at a profitable rate. And they grow rich on the small profits thus derived from numerous and considerable transactions.

Hong-Kong may be said to be a "port of distribution." A large portion of the goods intended for China, or for Europe, are unloaded there, and reshipped for transmission to their final destination.

The banking transactions are likewise of two descriptions. Either they are banking transactions properly so called; such as, bills of exchange, foreign remittances, (in either of the two hemispheres), open current ac-

counts, or advances to merchants; and no bankers in any country in the world are more obliging, or, as some think, more incautious. The story is still told in Hong-Kong, of a draft for £160,000 being discounted on the sole signature of a man, whose wits by far exceeded his worldly goods. Another class of banking business consists in investments made by bankers and capitalists in industrial or landed concerns, and started by them either at Hong-Kong itself, or in neighbouring countries; such as, Borneo, the Malay Peninsula, Tongking, etc.

Capital is abundant, and almost all business takes the form of Joint-stock Companies. Among many others, I may mention of those Companies connected with navigation, the powerful and prosperous Hong-Kong & Whampoa Dock Company with an original capital of $1,000,000, which has recently been added to; the Hong-Kong and Macao Steamboat Co. with a capital of $1,600,000; the Steam Launch Co.; the Hong-Kong Marina Co.; the China and Manila Steamship Co.:—of those connected with land, the Hong-Kong Land Investment Co. with a capital of 5 million dollars, the half of which only is paid-up; the Land Investment and Agency Co.; the Kowloon Land and Building Co.; the West Point Building Society; the Richmond Terrace

Estate Co.:—of industrial concerns, the New Sugar Refinery, with a capital of £200,000; the China Sugar Co. with a capital of $600,000; the Luzon Sugar Refinery with a capital of $125,000; the Green Island Cement Co.; the Hong-Kong Brick and Cement Co. with a capital of $100,000; the Hong-Kong Steam Laundry Co.; the Hong-Kong Ice Co.; the Hong-Kong Rope Manufacturing Co. with a capital of $150,000; the Hong-Kong Hotel Co.; the Hong-Kong Electric Co.; the firms of Geo. Fenwick and Co., Cruikshank and Co., Gordon and Co., H. G. Brown and Co., Campbell, Moore and Co., A. S. Watson and Co.;—the China Fire Insurance Co. with a capital of $2,000,000; the Hong-Kong Fire Insurance Co. with a capital of $2,000,000; the Union Insurance Society of Canton with a capital of $1,250,000, etc.:[1]—of foreign enterprises floated at Hong-Kong, the Compagnie des Charbonnages de Hone Gay (Tonking), with a capital of fr. 4,000,000, the shares of which, issued at fr. 500, are now worth

[1] The simple fact of the existence of Insurance Companies in these countries of the Far East, indicates that considerable progress has been made in the civilisation, the public safety, and the wealth of the country. Mud huts have been replaced by houses constructed of solid materials; foreign wars, insurrections, piracy, have ceased; and lastly, a vigilant body of police is on regular duty.

more than fr. 1,500; the Balmoral Gold Mining Co.; the East Borneo Planting Co.; the Labuk Planting Co.; the Punjom and Sunghie Mining Co.; the Songei Koyah and Lamag Planting Co.; the Darvel Bay Trading Co., etc., etc.

The enthusiasm displayed for this class of business is so great that, according to an official document, the number of these concerns is continually increasing. At the close of 1887, there were 26 joint-stock companies, with a paid-up capital of $26,233,000, representing, at the Hong-Kong Stock Exchange quotation, a value of $46,870,125. At the close of 1888, there were 36, with a paid-up capital of $28,867,640, representing, at the current quotation on the Hong-Kong Stock Exchange, a value of $53,951,525. Lastly, at the close of 1889, there were 54, with a paid-up capital of $44,074,950, worth on the Stock Exchange $77,200,550: *i. e.*, in the course of 3 years the Companies showed an increase of 28, their paid-up capital of $17,841,950, their value on Change of $30,330,425.

To these industrial, or land companies, must be added the financial undertakings which have preceded them, and which to a certain extent have created, and supported them. Hong-Kong possesses several important banks: The Australia and China Bank,

The New Oriental Bank, the London and China Bank, the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank. The last named is a first-class institution which rivals the leading banks of the West. Its paid-up capital is $7,500,000; its reserve fund exceeds $5,000,000; its notes in circulation exceed 3 millions, and its deposits 75 millions.

It is these banks, these companies, this equipment, which have given Hong-Kong the powerful position which it occupies on these coasts. Its distance from England is thirty days; from San Francisco, twenty days; from Australia and Pekin, three weeks; from Singapore and Japan, fifteen days, and from Shanghai, three days. It lies near the large islands of Oceania, and in close proximity to Indo-China, and is connected with the whole world by steam-communication, and submarine cables; it is, moreover, contiguous to China, over which it exercises, both politically and commercially, an indisputable influence. It has therefore become what, from the first hour, the British hoped for: a point where the common interests of Europe (and especially those of England) and China can meet in conference, a great international market, an 'emporium.'

Nay, more; it has even become a possible place of residence where existence is more than tolerable, where it is almost

agreeable, so successfully has the rigour of its climate been combated by the varied resources of engineering science, and the refining influences of civilisation.

The life of a rich colonist at Hong-Kong, were it not for the enervating heat of summer, would satisfy the most delicate native of the West.

His house stands amidst shady terraces on the mountain-slope. At a glance he takes in the roadstead, in a trice he is at the harbour. Rapidly conveyed by his chair-bearers along leafy and fragrant avenues, absently conning one of the excellent papers issued by the local press, he descends in the morning to the business quarter; his *compradore* or broker has preceded, and awaits him there. Looking through his pile of letters, he gives his orders, and telegraphs to London or to Shanghai; then, combining business with pleasure, he strolls along the quays or across the cool and busy streets to the bank, or the Council Chamber. For in every enterprise he has a share, his acumen and caution are well-known, and his name and advice are even in greater request than his capital.

One o'clock chimes from the Clock Tower; dinner-time draws near, and he reascends to his house. A few friends have been invited beforehand, and their number is swelled by

others picked up at the last moment. They were to have been a party of six, now they are twelve; no matter. The table is large; the hospitality munificent. A word to the Chinese 'butler' has sufficed; everything is ready: the covers laid, the chairs moved up to the table, the champagne iced.

In the afternoon, there is a renewed sojourn in work-a-day Hong-Kong. The day is short, for business closes at 5 o'clock. No time to lose therefore, unless our friend be an Honourable Privy Councillor and the Council has no sitting, or unless he be a member of the Jockey Club, the Polo Club, or the Football Club, and there are no races, regattas, or shooting matches between the Shanghai and the Hong-Kong Volunteer forces, no tennis matches between the ladies of Victoria and those of Singapore, nor cricket matches between the Artillery and Board of Health.

At 7 o'clock all is over; night is coming on, and supper-time arrives. Supper is taken either at home or at the Club. The Clubs —at least those whose entry is not strictly reserved—are excellent, the society select, the table exquisite, the library well-stocked, and furnished with all the newspapers of the world.

As to spending the evening, it is simply a matter of choice. To-day, there may be

a reception of the Freemasons of the island either at the Zetland, the St John's, or the Victoria Lodge; or his Excellency, deserting the Peak for the plains, throws open the reception-rooms of Government House; or perhaps there is a ball at the City Hall. The *Theatrical Company of the Deccan* may be giving a performance, or the *Hung Tung Theatre* may offer attractions, or—a still more dainty treat—there may be a lecture at the rooms of the *Literary Society*.

Sometimes a more stirring event occurs; such as, the inauguration of the statue of the Queen, the arrival of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, or of the Russian heir-apparent; the Jubilee of the Colony, or a fête in honour of tourists from Singapore, India, London, or even America, and the greater the distance they hail from, the greater the efforts that are made to prove to them that no nation in the world can rival Hong-Kong in hospitality.

Thus life glides on, varied, rapid, happy and useful. After three or four years, the colonist seeks renewed vigour by a visit to Old England, and in fifteen to twenty years' time he finally retires to his native country, a rich man. His hard-earned riches command respect, and for the future he follows attentively and indulgently, and at the same time encourages, the efforts of those who,

in their turn, are doing their utmost with dauntless energy and with the utmost faith in their ultimate success, to raise to so high a pinnacle of glory the fortunes of the Anglo-Saxon race.

THE BRITISH IN BURMA

PART I.

CONQUEST.—PACIFICATION.[1]

CHAPTER I.

THE CONQUEST.

Burma and its resources—Its situation between India and China—Advantages which it offers to a European nation—Causes which led to its annexation by Great Britain—Rapidity of its conquest.

BURMA, even at the present day, is but imperfectly known. According to the census taken in 1891 under the direction of Mr. Eales, its population numbers about 8 millions; namely, 4½ millions in Lower Burma, 3½ millions in Upper Burma, and 376,000 in the Shan states. But these figures still leave room for much uncertainty; the fact being that, in spite of the sea and the mountain-

[1] The following essay has been greatly facilitated by the extreme kindness of Lord Lytton, and Lord Duf-

chains which form its natural frontiers, the boundaries of Burma are not yet definitely fixed.

As a permanent result of the events of 1885, Burma (without distinctive epithet) comprises four subdivisions. One, the southern portion, was formerly known as British Burma; the other three formed the independent Kingdom of Burma, and consisted of, in the centre, Burma proper, inhabited chiefly by Burmese, and by the descendants of aboriginal races; to the north and north-west, Northern Burma, inhabited by various and sparsely scattered races, called Singphos, Shans, etc., more or less subject to Burmese rule; and lastly, to the east and north-east, in the direction of Siam and Cambodia, the tributary states peopled by races called Laotians or Shans.[1] These States, both from their territory and their population, are of

fering, of Mr. Austin Lee of the British Embassy at Paris, of Mr. Herbert of the India Office, of M. Harmand, Minister Plenipotentiary, who was for a long while Consul General for France at Calcutta, and lastly, of M. Pilinski, French Consul at Rangoon; we are desirous of expressing to all of them our sincere thanks.

[1] On the geography of these States see the "Report on a Journey in the Me-kong Valley" by Mr J. Archer, member of the British Consular Corps of Siam (February 1892) C. 6558; and on the political question see Lord Lamington's speech of the 10th February 1892, of which the 'Débats' of the 18th February gave an excellent *résumé*.

considerable extent, and the British do not scruple to appropriate the lion's share; but others may claim a portion. For this reason it is impossible to describe definitely and accurately the boundaries of Burma.

Viewed from a geographical, as well as from a hydrographical point of view, the country presents peculiarities assuredly worthy of attention; but the chief point of interest for European nations lies in the fact of its being situated between India and China. Indeed it borders on both of these countries, and although separated from both by lofty mountain-chains, the sea and mountain passes connect it with the former, and rivers with moderate currents which take their rise in the higher regions of Tibet, with the latter.

If we examine the orographic system of this region, without entering into the endless variety of mountain-chains and isolated peaks, we shall find that to the south of the Himalayas there is a range running almost in a parallel direction and extending eastwards, which at successive stages assumes the names of the Assam Mts., the Patkoi Mts., the Langtang Mts., etc. Now, the projection from these mountains of a succession of spurs towards the south gives this region its peculiar character, separating Burma, on the left, from India, and on the right, from China; on other sides their double

and triple ranges of parallel chains traverse almost the entire length of Indo-China, dividing it into so many valleys through which rivers flow towards the sea. In this region a number of rivers take their rise: the Chindwin, the Irrawaddy, the Sittang, the Salwen, the Menam, the Me-kong; and, further westward, the rivers of Annam, and the famous Red River.

Washed by the sea, traversed by numerous rivers, the majority of which were navigable, surrounded by mountains serving at once as a restraint on the ambition of its own inhabitants, and as a protection from that of other peoples, Burma, rich in the fertility of its soil and the treasures of its sub-soil, seemed destined to a peaceable and happy existence; but various circumstances, due to natural as well as human agency, conduced to shape its destiny otherwise.

Of Burma may be said what was said of Italy, that it is a 'geographical expression'. Its territory has been patched together piecemeal, its various races have been forcibly united.

The Burmese race, properly so called, is lost amid clans of the most diverse nomenclature which considerably outnumber it. These tribes—the Kyens, the Katchinese, the Shans, etc.,—inhabit the mountains, whilst the Burmese occupy the plains.

People dwelling in plains at the foot of high mountains, have singular characteristics. Irritated by the impenetrable and ever-present veil dividing them from the rest of the world, they are tempted to try their fortunes beyond. The mountains of Burma, which divide the country into a series of longitudinal sections, were of a nature to rouse the curiosity of its inhabitants.

They surmounted all the peaks in succession, explored all the valleys, subduing their inhabitants and, according to circumstances, either annexing their lands or imposing a tribute. Among these peoples were some who lived to the north or north-west: the people of Assam, for instance, who were separated from the Burmese by the Patkoi Mts. Their territory was repeatedly invaded by the Burmese and when, at a later period, Assam became a province of India, the British did not forget the fact that the Patkoi Mts. furnished a means of ingress from Burma into their territory, or, inversely, a means of egress from their own into Burma. The same thing happened on the west, on the side of Chittagong, Tipara, and Bengal. The Burmese took upon themselves the task of teaching their neighbours that their house-door was insecurely fastened.

To this circumstance which boded them no good must be added another.

A considerable portion of their territory is, as we have said, washed by the sea into which several large rivers flow: the Irrawaddy which, with its many mouths, forms a vast delta; the Sittang to which, by reason of its wide mouth, excessive importance has been attached; and lastly, the Salwen. For half a century or more these rivers have afforded an inaccurate opinion. It was thought that they would be the means of penetrating far into the interior of the adjoining countries —those flowing near the British frontier into the region whence the Indian river, the Brahmaputra, takes its rise; the others, beyond the Chinese frontier, into Tibet, perhaps even to Yunnan, or still farther north to Su-Chow. If this were so, it became evident that the people who held both the river-banks which were in so close proximity to Bengal, and the rivers themselves which formed the great water-ways of India and China could either cause uneasiness to the British in their Indian possessions, or secure a route to the fair southern provinces of the Celestial Empire.

If we add that Burma is rich in resources of all kinds; that from a period considerably anterior to the 15th century, it has traded with the whole of Southern Asia and the Malay Peninsula; that, lastly, it levied from a host of tribes tributes which might assu-

redly, in their case, be disputed, but which, if claimed by a great power, might become indisputable, the desire of the British to annex Burma may readily be understood.

Nevertheless, England hesitated for a long time. Burma had as exaggerated a reputation for its power as for its riches, but closer acquaintance soon dispelled this prestige. Towards the close of the 18th century, however, at which time the British began to devote more attention to Burmese affairs, this prestige was still almost intact. Now, just at the close of the 18th century England had quite enough difficulties in India, and America to make her chary of seeking to add to their number. And thus to keep her hands off Burma until the right moment had arrived, was both in her interests and intentions.

For thirty years and more England bided her time. The Burmese, mistaking her prudence for weakness, were lavish of provocations, which, however, she apparently treated with indifference. On the contrary, she manifested an increased anxiety to conciliate them by redoubling her missions and embassies, and by endeavouring to accredit residents, etc. Her apparent forbearance deceived no one. "It is certain," says the French traveller, Sonnerat,[1] "that the British will one day endeavour to annex Pegu." And, in

[1] "Voyage aux Indes Orientales, 1774—1781."

reality, as soon as Europe allowed them a respite, at the first insult of the Burmese Court, which has surpassed all Asiatic Courts in pride and folly, and on the pretext of giving Bengal a more scientific frontier, they laid their powerful hand on the long-coveted prey. Not to mention various other advantages, they compelled the Burmese to cede to them the provinces of Arakan, Yau, Tavoy, Mergui, and Tenasserim, thus establishing themselves simultaneously, with their repeatedly proved skill and foresight, at two points of primary importance, and closing two of the possible routes to India or China. (Expedition of 1825; treaty of Yandabo, 24th February 1826).

This but served to whet their appetite. Later, after a delay which was deemed sufficient, and as the imprudent Court of Ava, in defiance of the treaty which had been signed, continued its bravado and its provocations, a fresh expedition deprived it of its remaining southern provinces, definitively separating it from the sea, and carrying back its southern frontier to beyond the 19th degree of north latitude. (Expedition commenced in January 1852; annexation proclaimed on 20th December of same year).

From this moment, the Kingdom of Ava could no longer hope to escape from the clutches of its formidable neighbour. Its new frontier, a mere line drawn on paper,

could no longer protect it; it was at the mercy of the enemy. England, whilst continuing to disclaim all idea of conquest, was only awaiting her opportunity. No one doubted it. In 1880, a British officer, Colonel W. F. B. Laurie, author of "Our Burmese Wars," wrote: "Probably before long a King of Burma will have ceased to exist."

A blunder on the part of this king at last delivered him into the hands of his enemies. For some years past he had seen the danger growing, and had sought everywhere not for allies, but for protectors. This attitude disquieted England. He had sent an embassy to France, and Italy: this embassy neglected to pay a visit to London. He concluded a treaty with France which was a mere treaty of commerce and friendship: it was regarded by England as a treaty of alliance. A French Agent was installed in the new capital. The cry arose that he was about to control the policy of the kingdom. From that date the conquest was resolved on.

The fruit was, moreover, ripe; it was not even necessary to pluck it: it fell of its accord. For a long time past the British residents of Lower Burma, notably the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce, had been most urgent in their requests that the Government of India should intervene in the affairs of the kingdom. The revolting massacre of

nearly all the members of the Royal family, the flight of an immense number of panic-stricken inhabitants and, lastly, foolish quibbles with an English Company which was exploiting the forest,—the Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation,—furnished the opportunity sought for. The Government of India sent King Theebaw an ultimatum which he could not possibly accept. Immediately, British troops crossed the frontier (1885).

The expedition was conducted with almost unprecedented rapidity. By the 25th September, both troops and ships had all left Rangoon, and the Chief Commissioner, Mr. Bernard, foreseeing complications at hand, had to take upon himself the responsibility of detaining a gun-boat under orders to return to India. On the 17th October, the Secretary of State telegraphed from London to the Viceroy recommending him to send troops to Rangoon simultaneously with the presentation of his ultimatum to King Theebaw. On the 10th November, General Prendergast marched on Mandalay; on the 1st December, he entered the town and took the king prisoner; on the 2nd, he sent him captive to Rangoon, whence he was escorted to India. The entire country lay open to the conqueror; the ancient kingdom of Burma had ceased to exist. The expedition proper had been brought to a conclusion in three weeks.

CHAPTER II.

REPRESSION.

The period immediately succeeding the conquest—The insurrection in Upper and Lower Burma—Character of the insurrection—The dacoits—Pacification by military measures—Facilities afforded to the British by the organisation, and proximity of India—The standing army—The police: civil and military.

On the 1st December, Queen Victoria sent a telegram to the Viceroy of India thus worded: "I beg you to express my warm thanks to General Prendergast, and my admiration of the skill with which he has conducted the expedition throughout." This message from the Queen gave grounds for the supposition that now that the enemy had been defeated, the army disbanded, and the king taken prisoner, matters were settled. And the supposition was universally shared, for a short time at least. But this optimism was soon followed, as an eye-witness says,

"by the opinion that matters were still in a sad state of uncertainty." And men of experience saw plainly, as Lieut.-Colonel A. R. Gloag wrote in a letter to the "*Times*" of 12th September 1888, that the entire subjugation of the country would be a lengthy affair, and that the taking of Mandalay was merely the beginning, and not the finale. The war of 1824 had lasted for two years, but no less than five years had been required to re-establish order in the annexed provinces. That of 1852 had been of shorter duration: begun in January, it was brought to a conclusion in December; but the subsequent pacification of the country occupied eight years. How long a period would be required this time, after a three weeks' campaign? Even persons of experience, and such as apprehended possible, nay, inevitable troubles, under-estimated the length of time the work of pacification would last.

At the outset, thanks to the adoption of what were as a rule good measures, hopes were entertained of localising the disturbances in Upper Burma, and for a time this was successfully accomplished. But, in order to keep Upper Burma in check, it was found necessary to draw largely on the troops of Lower Burma, with the result that the latter, in turn, revolted. A mere relative degree of

tranquillity was only restored there by a resort to most rigorous measures; such as, expeditions against the bands of dacoits, setting a price on the heads of their leaders, merciless repression; and even then it was not until May and June 1887 that an amelioration began to be perceptible, and not until the close of 1888 that it was clearly recognised.

The native inhabitants of British Burma having long been accustomed to strict government, were brought back to their allegiance easily enough. Towards the middle of September it was ascertained that not one of the prisoners then in jail spoke English—proof positive that they must all be natives of the new provinces. But whilst in the south tranquillity was gradually being restored, in the north the insurrection was apparently becoming envenomed.

In 1888, after three years of unabated efforts, the official *bulletins*, though meagre enough, were more alarming than ever. The entire district of Mandalay was a prey to fire and sword: for the space of three months conflagrations were of almost nightly occurrence; the telegraph wires were torn down; the works on the railroad from Tungu to Mandalay which was then in course of construction were menaced; even the Lower-Burma line (Rangoon-Prome) was seized at

Segu, a few hundred miles below Prome; the bands of dacoits were mustering afresh and, assuming the offensive, were successfully attacking posts occupied by the police and the regular troops. And "affairs" of this kind were of such frequent occurrence that the Correspondent of the "*Times*" wrote to that paper on the 5th May 1888: "It is impossible to give particulars of the numerous encounters with 'dacoits' which have recently taken place."

These 'dacoits' correspond exactly to what the French call 'pirates' at Tong-King. They do not form a separate class of the population, but are recruited from all classes; they are, indeed, the population. Properly speaking, they are neither brigands nor patriots, though both are to be met with amongst them, but are usually peasants who, under ordinary circumstances, cultivate their fields, (though they have no particular affection for this kind of work), but who, in time of trouble, and impoverished, if not ruined, think it fit, and find it agreeable, to try their luck at fighting and pillaging. They attack and rob both natives and Europeans without drawing too fine a distinction; and, indeed, they prefer the former, because they are neither so well armed nor so formidable as antagonists. Besides this, in attacking natives, they have every-

thing to gain: stripped of all their possessions and with no other prospect before them but starvation, their victims of yesterday are forced to become their comrades of to-day. Thus the ranks of the victors are recruited by their victims. Nor are the latter by any means reluctant to exchange the hoe for the pike. Robbery ('piraterie'), or 'dacoity' as the English call it, is not a dishonourable occupation in their eyes: it appears to them quite natural, and even excusable in time of civil war; and, were a young man to decline to take part in it, he would be considered as wanting not only in courage, but in common-sense as well.

The above description applies to the ordinary 'dacoit' of Burma, or 'pirate' of Tong-King. Sometimes, under the influence of more distinguished leaders, or under circumstances of peculiar gravity, they rise from the level of pillagers to that of patriots. This occurred in Annam proper. The insurrection there at once assumed a national character; under the leadership of Mandarins of high rank, the 'pirates' (for this name was still thought most applicable) intended, above all, to drive the French out of their native country; this did not, however, prevent them from pillaging, in their leisure moments, the people with

whom they came in contact on their line of march.

The same thing happened in Burma. At a certain epoch, resistance which up till then had been little more than a pillaging foray, became a political and patriotic task. The dacoits formed themselves into large bands, led by able chieftains; the struggle assumed the character of guerilla warfare; dacoity became a hostile movement of the population,—"a popular resistance to our rule in Burma such as we had never experienced in any part of India, and such as will call for the presence of a strong garrison for many years." [1]

Now dacoits are a class of enemy that, though not exactly dangerous, is peculiarly troublesome to European troops. No foe is more irregular in its action, none more intangible. For instance, a district, that of Tavoy, satisfactorily administered and free from any disturbance for two consecutive years, suddenly revolts without any known pretext (February 1888). Another, where a certain amount of fermentation was still in existence, takes up arms and attacks the British, two officers being killed. A column commanded by a Colonel (Col. Symons)

[1] "Problems of Greater Britain." By Sir Charles Dilke, Vol II, p. 6.

hurries to avenge their death: the culprits are nowhere to be found, not even a trace of agitation is apparent; for six weeks the column fruitlessly scours the country, and eventually retires without having accomplished its object. The plan was originated of forming columns of from 50 to 100 men each, and sending them in pursuit, or, at any rate, in search of the dacoits. Almost invariably both search and pursuit proved fruitless. The dacoits fled, taking advantage of the shortest routes, and sought refuge in inaccessible localities, or in friendly villages; there they laid aside their arms, mixed with the inhabitants, and took part in their occupation, no one could have recognised them, and no one would have dared to betray them.

No sooner did the rains cease than dacoity immediately increased. The bands amalgamated, the chief of highest repute took the lead. Some of these chiefs were famous: for instance, Boshway, caught and executed in October 1887, and who was in some measure the last of the great chiefs. They possessed a marvellous influence over the people. At their call, the young men flocked to their standard. The late Royal family made the most of this enthusiasm. Almost at one and the same time five or six authentic princes were

going the round. On the other hand, any ambitious individual who chose to assume the title of this or that prince, had no difficulty in instigating an insurrection in his district.

Such, rapidly sketched, were the chief difficulties with which the British had to contend during the period from 1885 to 1888, in Lower and especially Upper Burma, and which they had first of all to surmount. There could be no question of organisation or improvements until the country had been restored to peace and security, or until peaceably inclined folk were at liberty to obey the laws, without thereby imperilling their life or their property. To-day, the work is still incomplete. Nearly the whole of 1889, and the years 1890 to 1892, in spite of prosperous seasons, witnessed more disturbances, and more expeditions than would have been thought possible in 1888. And a considerable period must yet elapse before it will be possible to dispense with—if not actual campaigns—at least military parades through the mountainous regions and border lands inhabited by the turbulent tribes. Such expeditions are not accomplished in a day, and besides this, the British have on more than one occasion cancelled the results they had attained by a subsequent mistaken course of action, of which we shall give some

instances in a subsequent chapter. Nevertheless, important progress has been made, and it will be interesting as well as useful to consider the processes and methods which have proved conducive to the result.

But before entering into these particulars, it is important not to forget that the British were favoured by exceptional facilities in the task they were about to undertake. Lower Burma had already been a British possession, certain portions for sixty, others for thirty years past, and was organised on the Indian administrative system. The same Commissioner had control over both sections of the province: in dealing with the new territory, he had all the resources of the old at his disposal. [1]

Again, Burma was a province of India and not of England, just as the Commissioner was the Agent of the Indian and not of the British Government. And India was near at hand, rich in resources, in troops and in officials. At its head was a Council invested with wide powers, which thanks to the liberal spirit of successive Secretaries of State for

[1] This did not hinder the perpetration of many blunders. Notably the management of the commissariat department from beginning to end, and up to March 1891, (see the '*Times*' of 24th March), gave rise to criticisms which were apparently well-founded.

India have been still further extended;[1] lastly, presiding over this Council in his capacity of Viceroy and Governor-General was a man of broad views, rare judgment and ready decision,—Lord Dufferin,—who owes his title of Marquis of Ava to his successful policy in Burma. All these circumstances, of which assuredly the most important was that the decisions emanated, not from London, but from Rangoon, Calcutta or Simla, and from men who had a knowledge of the situation and its necessities;—all these circumstances which no other country could have possessed in combination, facilitated the task of conquest, of pacification, and of organisation, though this should not lessen our estimate of their merit.

A country cannot be conquered or pacified by the mere discharge of cannon shots or the mere issue of decrees alone. Both are requisite, simultaneously as well as successively. Their effect commingles and combines, and as regards the final result,

[1] "Her Majesty's Government is desirous of according to your Excellency a large measure of liberty in regard to the precise methods which you may deem suitable for the reorganisation of the government of Upper Burma. Your Excellency will, in due course, have to decide what number of troops may be necessary for the maintenance of peace, and for the suppression of the bands of dacoits." (Despatch of Lord Randolph Churchill to Lord Dufferin, 31st December 1885).

he would be a rash person who would venture to discriminate between the degree of credit due respectively to the military man, and statesman. Our researches will, however, be facilitated, and their utility enhanced, if we consider apart the political and the military measures.

If we examine the measures adopted by the British for the pacification of Burma from the military standpoint only, we shall find that they amount to this: that they had at hand, at the right moment, a sufficient force of troops fitted for the task both by nature and qualifications, and also a sufficient number of commanding officers whose experience was of the sort which the country required.

Here again, be it said, the British were in luck. They drew the greater portion of the forces employed in Burma from India. Now, on the one hand, India was then in a state of absolute tranquillity and could spare from her usual effective force as many troops as were deemed requisite, and again, these troops of the Indian army had lived in a climate and manœuvred in a country similar to that they had to encounter in the valleys of the Irrawaddy and the Chindwin, or on the slopes of the Burmese mountains. Lastly, the generals who were placed at the head of the expedition had themselves also

served in India and were actually holding commands in that country when ordered to proceed to Burma.

All this made the task easier. And yet the ability to decide at the right moment on the necessary sacrifices, and even to appoint men to the precise post for which they are fitted, is a talent which is by no means ordinarily met with. In both these respects the British, despite some small errors in the details, were skilful, or fortunate.

Several generals successively held the command in Burma. I have already mentioned the name of the general who is now Sir Henry Prendergast: others might be named: General White, General Gordon, General Faunce, General Wolseley. All of these, and notably General White who held the command for a considerable length of time, rendered good service. But there is one general, who exercised a very decided influence on the pacification of Burma, I allude to General Roberts.

Sir Frederick (now Lord) Roberts held at that time the high position of Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Forces, besides being a member of the Viceregal Council. Lord Dufferin requested him to temporarily vacate his post, in order to assume supreme command of the Burmese expeditionary force:

he accepted. This twofold decision denoted courage. At this moment, people both in England and in India were becoming weary of the Burmese Question, and the post of the general commanding was consequently the more dangerous. Nor was this all. The British have always been chary of subordinating civil to military authorities. Now, if a man of the status of Sir Frederick, and a Chief Commissioner of even Mr. Bernard's capacity were brought face to face, it was evident that, in spite of every precedent and of all possible instructions, the great moral authority would remain with the general, and that in the event of a difference of opinion, he would have the last word. Notwithstanding the possible gravity of these circumstances, Lord Dufferin did not hesitate to offer Sir Frederick, nor he to accept, the command in Burma. This choice which might have entailed great inconvenience, in reality entailed none whatever. And yet, when Sir Frederick's mission came to an end, something like a feeling of relief was experienced, though he had fulfilled to the utmost all that was expected of him. "He has," the *Times* correspondent wrote (8th February 1887), "justified the exception to the ordinary routine, which sent him on a mission far from the usual ground of a Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Forces."

The chief service rendered by General Roberts—though he did not wait till the Burmese difficulty arose to do so—was that of giving, with Lord Dufferin's assent, the generals under his orders as many troops as they required, and even more.—Not but what, on several occasions, so recently indeed as 1890, the error was committed of denuding certain districts where the insurrection was scarcely suppressed. However, errors of this sort could not be, and generally speaking were not, of much ultimate importance.

For the expedition itself, a few thousand men had sufficed. After the occupation of Mandalay and the capture of the king, it was hoped that a portion of the troops might be recalled. But Lord Dufferin, who from the day that he entered Burma had an extraordinarily clear perception of the exigencies of the situation, instead of decreasing, augmented their number. Indeed, the march on Bhamo was still to come, the pursuit of the dacoits, the occupation of the entire country had to be accomplished; the latter task eventually necessitated small expeditionary corps, flying columns, and stationary posts. Consequently, the army was at once increased to 11,000 men, and a little later, to 14,000. Towards the middle of 1886 there were 17,000 in Upper, and 7,200

in Lower Burma, and this number still appeared insufficient. "It is evident," wrote General Roberts to the Indian Government, "that to carry out the plans indicated by General White there is not a man too many in Burma; indeed, it appears to me that certain districts are not occupied in sufficient force. At this season of the year (30th July) it is impossible to send reinforcements; but I would strongly urge that reinforcements and transports be got ready so as to reach Rangoon by about the 15th October, by which time General White will find his force diminished by casualties and sickness."

And this was done. However, less than two years later, while the country was still far from being pacified the regular troops (Indian and European) were reduced to under 10,000 men, of whom only a few thousand were Europeans. This considerable decrease must not be taken as indicating a condemnation of the errors hitherto committed, nor was it an imprudent concession to public opinion.

As a matter of fact, there occurred in Burma what has occurred in other countries, and notably in Tongking. Time and the progress made by the conquerors has effected a change in the character, and conditions of the struggle. The large bands have been dispersed, or split up. All

real combatants, all those capable of sustaining the onslaught of British troops have been driven far away from the inhabited centres into a corner, either on the frontier or in some inaccessible spot. Since then, it has been found possible to reduce the number of stationary posts in the interior. Of these, there were 150 in 1887; some thirty have been retained. The duty of these regular troops consists in little more than keeping a watch over the inhabitants. Quartered in the towns or at points chosen for their strategic value, their influence lies chiefly in their presence, and their prestige. As to the pillagers and marauders who are at present the only hostile forces to be feared, and who are only formidable on account of their numbers, another body of men is now charged with their suppression, viz., the mounted infantry and the police.

The mounted infantry which for a short time numbered 1800 men, now numbers 1200; its name sufficiently indicates its nature.

The police-force though dating from 1886, was not, strictly speaking, organised until 1887. The work that remained to be done was no longer soldiers', but police work; all that was now necessary was the maintenance of order, and to afford the people protection from dacoits whether they came singly or in bands. This is a task which pertains to

police; and European troops would be no more capable of rendering them efficient assistance than would a battery of artillery of helping the gendarmes in Paris. "The soldier," Lord Dufferin wrote at the time, "is but the pioneer of order; the permanent guardian of public tranquillity is the policeman." In consequence, the police was organised.

It is a fact worthy of remark, as indicating what a sense of the requirements of government our neighbours possess, that the military whose importance was thereby diminished, not only concurred in the utility of creating this force, but even assumed the initiative in the matter. "Unless," wrote General Roberts (6th February 1887) "a body of police is organised on a strong footing, our prospects of pacifying the country are but very remote." And another document affirms that the civil and military authorities unanimously agreed that the time had arrived for police to occupy by degrees numerous posts in Upper Burma, and to take charge of the country.

There were to be two kinds of police: a civil force which would be under the orders of native officials, and would maintain security in the districts under their control—an arrangement which was not effected without some opposition on the part of certain officers, and a military force strongly officered

by Europeans, whose duty was to occupy certain posts in the interior, to prevent a concentration of the dacoits, and, in short, to clear the country of them. Both forces were recruited for the most part from India among certain warlike tribes,[1] and also, after considerable hesitation, among the Burmese, notwithstanding the distrust entertained of their integrity and reliability. In 1887, it was estimated that a force of about 16,000 was required; at the outset, however, their number was only 9,000, which was subsequently increased to 11,000. At the close of the year 1888, the force exceeded the estimated requirements, their number being 20,000; and General Stedman, their commander in Upper Burma, stated that their strength was still inadequate. This led to a further increase, and in 1889 the police numbered 35,000 men, of whom 15,000 belonged to the civil, and 20,000 to the military forces. Between them they occupied more than 600 stations. At present the

[1] In the course of the year 1891, it had been proposed to recruit the police-force exclusively among Burmese tribes (Karens, Shans, etc.) But the Chief Commissioner, Sir A. Mackenzie, pointed out the inconveniences, and even the great danger of such a measure: danger for the safety of the province; inconveniences, *on account of possible events in Siam;* and these two arguments of his led to the adjournment of the question.

civil police is only some 6,000 to 7,000 strong and its organisation is not strikingly good, while the strength of the military force has diminished to 16,000; the two forces occupied between them, in 1888, 175, in 1889, 192, and at the beginning of 1890, 173 stations.

If, without entering into every detail, we were to confine ourselves to those military measures which were adopted with a view to pacification, we should have to mention the various attempts at military colonies which were extended with the twofold duties of keeping the natives in check and improving the country occupied. Nor should we have to omit to record another, and very important, measure, regarding which opinions differed, namely, the general disarmament of the Burmese and Karen villages, when over 40,000 fire-arms were confiscated. This had the result of depriving them of the means of attacking the British, but it, at the some time, prevented any possible resistance on their part to dacoits. These are, however, but secondary matters, and we must hurry on to another portion of the work which devolved on the British, viz., that of paving the way for pacification by measures of a political nature.

CHAPTER III.

PACIFICATION.

Pacification by political means—Good understanding between the civilian officials and the military leaders—Justice and administration—Errors and faults; cruelties—Attitude towards the native chiefs; towards the vassal tribes; towards China—The treaty of July 1887.

AT THE outset of this portion of our studies, it is of great importance to lay particular stress on the purport of certain words used, and to define what we mean by "measures of a political order," and by "pacification." It must not be imagined that these divisions: "pacification" and "organisation," "measures of a military order" and "measures of a political order," which we have adopted with a view to explaining more clearly a complicated subject, correspond as regards time to definitely fixed and distinct

periods, and in their application to positively distinct methods. When the conquest, properly so called, is once completed, and the problem of pacifying the country has to be faced, it does not become a question of a certain length of time during which the military act with perfect freedom with their own resources and on their own responsibility, succeeded by another period, when their service abruptly ceases and gives place to the rule of politicians and representatives of civil power. Nor are the methods of pacification absolutely distinct and separate from those of organisation, any more than a period of pacification is absolutely distinct from a period of organisation. Pacification paves the way for organisation, and is bound up with it by the transfer of its methods, be they good or bad, so that it is well nigh impossible to say where the one begins and the other ends, or which measure is one of pacification and which, one of organisation.

From the very first day, when the army was driving before it the scattered Burmese battalions, the British were revolving in their minds the best means for influencing the population by administrative measures; and not for one moment did they create any distinct diference between the action of military, and that of civil power. They took care, even while the conquest was still being carried out, to

instal in the chief centres political functionaries with instructions to establish there a primary and rudimentary administrative organisation, whilst the army maintained order. And, on the other hand, even after the conquest was complete, they demanded the co-operation of the military, and claimed their presence for purely political purposes. General Roberts wrote in his instructions to General Mc Pherson: "The troops must make their presence felt everywhere, and must remain sufficiently long in the principal localities to admit of the civil authorities establishing the administration on a solid basis, so as to inspire the people of the country with a feeling of confidence in the strength of our rule, and to dispel all fear of their being subsequently harassed by dacoits."

A task of this kind implies, and, indeed, exacts perfect unanimity between civil and military authorities. "I have *consulted*," wrote General White who at one time had 30,000 men under his orders, and exercised his authority with ability not often met with—"I have *consulted* with the Chief Commissioner and he *concurs* with me in the scheme I have planned." Do not, however, suppose that the British, whether soldiers or civilians, were philosophers ready at once to sink all rivalry for the greater good of

their country.[1] But these unfortunate conflicts were never made known to the general public, the reason being that in India there is an undisputed authority far above *coteries* and rivalries, and powerful enough to subdue and control them all, namely, the Viceroy.

The British with their admirable instinct of Government have conferred on the Governors of their colonies sufficiently wide powers to prevent any of their lawful subjects being able, or even tempted, to dispute, and still less to resist, their authority. I have already spoken of the powers which the Governor of Hong-

[1] Sir Charles Dilke makes a discreet allusion to these conflicts of opinion in his work "Problems of Greater Britain" (II. p. 51.) In Burma, less discretion was observed. The following instance is the text of what the *Times* correspondent telegraphed on the 25th February 1888. "The state of the district of Kyusk is excellent. This is no doubt due to the cordial co-operation of the civil and military authorities. Similar harmonious action is unfortunately not universal in Upper Burma." Besides, conflicts were not confined to civil and military authorities. It appears that in Burma every one considered his district as a territory reserved to his own exclusive action. Whoever encroached upon this territory was treated as an enemy, to the great detriment of public affairs. An officer, Captain Raikes, was deputed by the authorities of his district to negotiate with a tribe of Chins living in the neighbourhood of the district of Pagay. The Superintendent of that district, Captain Eyre, on hearing of this mission, at once invited the Chins "to enter into communication with him rather than with Captain Raikes."

Kong possesses. In India the Governor-General in Council, as representative of the Queen, dictates orders to all authorities, whether civil or military, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Forces is to him merely the Chief of one of the Services whom he admits to the discussion of his views solely from motives of courtesy and for the furtherance of his own interests. Under these circumstances, rivalries resulting from *esprit de corps* cannot create much mischief; the Viceroy, as supreme chiet of the Military and Civil Services, possesses the means of checking and preventing them. I may add that his task is easy enough with officers who, like all Anglo-Saxons, are imbued with a spirit of discipline, and with civilians who, like the majority of British officials, are of striking respectability and merit.

In order to pacify a country, it is obvious that measures of a pacifying nature must be resorted to. This is self-evident and a truism; and yet, its acceptation by Governments is but of recent date. They have long had, and perhaps still retain, a secret hankering after repressive measures. This may be explained by saying that the earlier agents of pacification are the very ones who conducted the conquest. However that may be, all present-day conquerors endeavour to seek favour with the conquered

by moderation and good-will. And the British did not fail to do so in Burma.

Their task was a difficult one. It would have been difficult for any nation, but for them it was especially so, because their usual support was wanting in this case. The fact is that, in their conquests, they always look to the aristocracy, to princes, religious bodies, or Governments for support. Now, Burma, as I shall presently indicate in some detail, possesses no aristocracy at all, and no longer had a Government. The British found themselves, consequently, face to face with a sparse population, wanting in cohesion, and difficult to conciliate.

It is, or is at all events admitted to be, an axiom that Eastern nations have a craving for justice. Whoever brings them this sovereign good is sure of a hearty welcome. This was, apparently, the trump-card in the hand of the British. They are certainly firm believers in justice. They look upon the possibility of obtaining justice as the highest form of security; upon the administration of justice, as the most sacred of all duties, the highest of all functions. Wherever they go, they build as soon as practicable a court of law, and appoint a judge. This done, they can safely go about their business. They pursued precisely the same course of action in Burma. The manner in which

their Indian officials are recruited admits of their being rendered competent almost at will, either as administrators, collectors, or magistrates. Thus from the very first, even in the most primitive stage of government, they have always had men capable of the administration of justice who themselves were intensely eager for it, and the majority of whom have indeed judged most impartially.[1]

The sentences passed by them have generally been in conformity with the rulings and purposes of the law, unswayed by opiniative caprice, or administrative requirements. I quote, as an instance, two decisions much to their credit: one, condemning to hard labour certain members of the police force who had terrorised the country entrusted to their supervision; the other, acquitting a native accused of having killed a British po-

[1] From the 24th January 1886, that is to say, six weeks after the commencement of the occupation, there were civil officials, and notably magistrates, in a certain number of districts. (See "Burma," 1886, C. 4887, p. 15.) In more than one place, however, the haste made to establish a civil administration resulted in the appointment of young and inexperienced officials to posts where the duties to be performed were of an extremely delicate nature, and this provisional state of affairs lasted for years. During the same period, districts in Lower Burma which were absolutely peaceable, were administered by men of consummate experience, whose proper place should have been in the disturbed provinces of the north.

lice officer. "I am of opinion," said the judge in the latter case (Mr. Hildebrand, Superintendent of the Shan States) "that the Ngami who killed Mr, Powell may be held blameless for firing his gun to liberate his son-in-law. Even if his son-in-law had not begged for his help, the fact that his two sons had been illegally, and most unjustly massacred before his eyes, would constitute an excuse for the speedy vengeance which he exacted for their death by killing their murderer." This judgment—a remarkable instance of impartiality—created a great sensation in Burma, and evoked criticisms from nearly all the local press. The *Rangoon Gazette* concluded its remarks thereon with the following words: "This is tantamount to giving every more or less barbarous native authority to kill British officials whenever he finds them in the act of arresting one or other of his relations on a charge which he regards as illegal."

There would be some foundation for such fears, were a conqueror liable to exhibit excessive partiality towards the conquered. Notwithstanding the honourable examples which I have just quoted, this was not, nor indeed could be, the case with the British. It must be explicitly stated that the almost exclusive belief in justice by which they are characterised, often leaves room for injus-

tice. For, properly speaking, what the Englishman approves of in justice is not so much equity, as right. In order to quiet his conscience, he claims a recognition of his right; this right once confirmed, he pursues it to the end. But the right of the conqueror proclaimed by himself is liable to be exorbitant. The judge is human, and consequently liable to err, and to be influenced by his emotions. It is owing, too, to the very fact that justice and judicial decisions have constituted the sole restraint upon their strict right, that the British have been guilty of frivolity, errors, and even cruelty, of which the least that can be said is, that they were singularly harmful to their own cause.

I merely mention, as a record, certain atrocious proceedings. One instance was that of an officer who, suspecting a native of a capital crime and being unable to obtain a confession, had him led in front of the firing party, and so extorted a false confession. Another, a lover of dramatic scenes, took a photograph of the torture which he had himself ordered to be inflicted. These are, I am willing to believe,[1] revolting ex-

[1] After these articles had appeared in the "Revue des deux Mondes", I received a letter from a friend, who has long resided in Burma, of which the following is an extract: "The few abuses which you describe,

ceptions, and public opinion condemned them. But it was a general practice to shoot, on the spot, and without trial, every dacoit taken with arms in his hands. A very simple plan, truly, but one which had not even the excuse of usefulness; for the Burmese, like the Annamites, have no fear of death. And of this, the British were well aware; here is what one of their historians has written: "A detachment of the Naval Brigade, having captured a dozen dacoits, proceeded to shoot them one after the other. It was thought that this would produce a greater impression than shooting them all at once. The first was placed upright with his back to the wall. A conical ball struck him between the eyes, splitting open the upper part of his skull, and causing it to hinge backwards in a strange and grotesque fashion. At this sight, his comrades who were near at hand awaiting their turn, burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. They were still laughing at it as they advanced in succession to take up their position in front of the firing party. They looked upon the occurrence as a capital joke." The Government answering a question on the

are not the exception, but almost the rule; the fact being that there is a play of rivalry, of competition, and of influences which causes some abuses to be made public, whilst the remaining ones are carefully concealed, though not unknown."

matter in Parliament, promised to put an end "to a state of affairs which was a scandal, and might become a danger." But the executions went on as before, and it was not until Lord Dufferin embarked for Burma, that, on the very day of his departure General Prendergast issued an order forbidding these "arbitrary executions." Since that time, the death-penalty has become less frequent, and can now only be carried out after a regular trial, and on the sentence of a civil magistrate.

So much for cruelty, and now for injustice. In 1887, a leader of dacoits surrendered himself on the word of an official who guaranteed that his life should be spared; the Government of India declined to sanction this promise, and ordered the man to be shot. In 1890—when a system of jurisprudence apparently existed—a redoubted dacoit, Boh Yanyum, received a letter from an officer of police promising that his life should be spared; the Buddhist high-priest also intervening on his behalf, Boh-Yanyum made his submission to the Deputy Commissioner of Myingyan. The latter, without even denying that the promise had been made, condemned him to death. The whole province rose against this, for Boh Yanyum—an uncommon circumstance—was perhaps more of a patriot than a pillager; the people, the priests, the

monks, all issued a manifesto in his favour; the appellate judge taking into consideration the fact that he had been promised his life, and even something more, commuted, having no power to do more, the sentence of death to one of transportation for life, and recommended him to mercy. For months, however, the Government remained insensible to justice, to the prayers of the natives, and even to the interests of British rule; and it was only after prolonged delay that it pronounced its decision on this burning question. It confirmed the commutation of the penalty, but declined to grant a free pardon, merely undertaking to reconsider the matter five years later.

By this unfair dealing the British have been the means of even circumstances beyond their control being attributed to their bad faith. In the early days of the insurrection the number of prisoners taken was enormous. The prisons were over-crowded. It is estimated that either in Burma, or in India whither they had been taken *en masse*, the number of native prisoners was close on 50,000. Lord Dufferin put a stop to this epidemic of arrests; and even ere long restored the majority of the prisoners to liberty. In order to deter them from rejoining their former bands, work was promised them in the Government dock-yards, on the roads,

and on the railway in course of construction from Tungu to Mandalay. Unfortunately, their very numbers prevented their being all provided with employment: this had the result of lowering, though this time undeservedly, the British reputation for fair dealing, and of perceptibly retarding the pacification. A long time must elapse before the majority of the population can be restored to confidence.

More happy results were attained among the class of people whom I might, though somewhat inaccurately, term the aristocracy: the Buddhist priests, the members of the Grand Council, the most influential of the Chiefs were the object of much kind attention, and consideration.

The enemies of the British had spread the report that they bore less ill-will to King Theebaw and his dynasty than to the Buddhist religion and its followers. The accusation was a grave one. In Burma almost the whole nation goes through a course of priestly life; everyone, at least once in his life-time, assumes the garb of a monk, and as the vows are not in reality perpetual, the lay society is composed to a large extent of persons who have temporarily worn the religious garb. To attack the religion, was tantamount to attacking the whole nation. In order to overcome these prejudices, the

representatives of the national religion were treated with the utmost circumspection.

At the time when British troops were marching on Mandalay, the Buddhist high-priest was admitted to an audience with Sir Charles Bernard, the then Chief Commissioner, at Rangoon, who assured him that, whatever happened, no danger threatened the Buddhist religion. In the course of the campaign, and during the period occupied in taking possession of the country, both civilians and officers in the army were instructed to pay particular respect to priests, monks, and monasteries. General Roberts personally displayed considerable deference to the religious authorities. The British even affected to treat them as important political factors. When it was known that the dacoit chief, Ala-Oo, wished to surrender, the Commissioner of the district, Mr. Colquhoun, wrote to him that, if he preferred it, he was at liberty to make his submission through the medium of the Buddhist high-priest of Mandalay. All this produced an excellent impression.[1]

[1] Since then, the conciliatory policy inaugurated by Sir Charles Bernard and Sir Frederick Roberts has been abandoned. Monks have, with more or less justice, been imprisoned. Very little attention has been paid to the more important of the native authorities. The high-priest who negotiated the submission of Boh Yanyum has been unable to secure the fulfilment of the engagements entered into. The result of all this is, that the religious element is rapidly becoming alienated from the British.

Previous to British rule, there was a Council of State or *Hlutdaw* at the head of affairs, which might be regarded as rather coordinate with, than subordinate to, the king. This Council (which reminds one of the *Comat* of the Court of Hué) was composed of the Chief Ministers of the State, or 'Woongys', who were four, and sometimes six in number. The hope had been momentarily entertained of the possibility of maintaining the Council, and of carrying on the government by it, or at least in combination with it. For reasons which I shall presently relate, this idea had to be abandoned: the *Hlutdaw* was abolished; but its honorary or active members were studiously won over to British policy. They were entrusted with the exercise of functions which were suitably remunerated; certain distinctions were conferred on them, and so forth.

The British displayed equal wisdom in their dealings with the vassal tribes, as in those with the high Burmese officials. During the native *régime,* the relations of these tribes with the Court of Ava had been tolerably lax. The bonds of suzerainty relaxed in proportion to the distance from the frontiers of Central Burma, and the rights claimed by the latest Alompra, in many cases, served no other purpose than that of furnishing a pretext for intervention.

The British were far from wishing to profit by claims at once so varied and so open to dispute. In Central Burma and the adjoining provinces they assumed with vigour the reins of government: but even there they took great care not to offend susceptibilities. When a hitherto independent chief appeared to possess real authority in his district, they affected to treat him as a sort of ally, and furnished him, in cases of emergency, with troops to assist him in upholding his authority, and maintaining order. With the more remote provinces, as, for instance, the Shan States, whose possession is a matter of controversy between Burma, Siam, China, and other countries, and which were in reality almost autonomous at that time, they displayed a yet greater degree of prudence.[1] With one they entered into negotiations, with the object of securing its assent to a British

[1] The appendix to Colonel Yule's book contains a statement of China's indisputable rights over certain of the Shan States. As to Siam, according to a recent report make by Mr. Scott, Superintendent of the Shan States, it claims all the states which lie to the east of the Salwen; the British, on the contrary, claim, as successors to the Burmese, five of these same states. Thus there are reasons for a settlement of territorial limits both with Siam and with China. Discreet and prudent persons demand such a settlement. (See The *Times* of 8th March 1892.) They hope that it may have the result, by reducing the territory claimed by Burma, of preventing immediate contact with the French possessions, and thus obviating all chance of rivalry, and dispute.

Resident; thus to the Tsawbwa (the Chief's local name) of Momeit they sent, nominally as assistant and adviser, Mr. Colquhoun, with troops and police, to aid him in his struggle with the dacoits. To another they accorded a fixed term, which was, however, continually prolonged, for tendering his submission; thus, to the Tsawbwa of Wuntho who had retreated into the mountains with 2,000 men, besides elephants and cannon, they gave a whole year, wherein to return to submission; and when he eventually surrendered, they confirmed him in his state of semi-independence. Prudence was, in this case, almost synonymous with weakness, and confidence the mere equivalent of blindness, as was proved by the result. Finally by the *Shan States Act*, passed at the close of 1888, the native chiefs were allowed, as they had been under the Burmese dynasty, to administer their districts themselves under the supervision of a British Superintendent. Similarly, in 1887 and up to 1890, negotiations were entered into with certain tribes, with a view to secure their neutrality, and to put a stop to their incursions into neighbouring valleys. It was not until quite recently that it was decided to adopt rigorous measures against certain frontier tribes, with whom it appeared impossible to come to an understanding.

To sum up, this line of policy has consisted entirely in settling the various questions in rotation, and in interposing a sufficient interval between their successive settlement; and a very wise policy it has been proved to be.

The same remark is equally applicable to the negotiations conducted with the Chinese Empire which ended in the treaty of the 24th July 1887(ratifications exchanged in London, on the following 25th August). China had always asserted certain claims to Burma. Her claims were twofold: firstly, a general right of suzerainty over the whole of Burma; and secondly, a right of actual ownership as regards the district of Bhamo more especially, as well as certain adjacent districts. The British, in their official documents, made every reservation as to the first of these claims, and, on the other hand, admitted that the second was more "reasonable." In practice, however, they did not hesitate to recognise the first, and to repudiate the second claim. They took possession of Bhamo, to which place they attributed special importance. At the same time, with a view to calming China's susceptibilities, they conceded to her an apparent suzerainty. "If," wrote Lord Dufferin, "the Secretary of State does not object to such a course, the Government of India can have no objection, to the confirmation by its representative in Burma of

the existing practice of an amicable exchange of presents (remark the euphemism) with the Governor of Yunnan, in such manner as may seem most convenient. The clause in the arrangement which refers to intervention should, however, be carefully considered." This arrangement was the Treaty of July 1887. Article 1 stipulated that "in so far as it has been customary in Burma to send missions to China with presents of the products of the country, Great Britain agrees that the chief officer in Burma shall send the customary decennial missions; the envoys to be of Burmese nationality." In consideration of this concession—a concession which some other countries might have imitated with advantage—China agreed in article 2 to allow Great Britain complete liberty of action.

This did not, indeed, have the effect of suppressing all the little frontier incidents, of frequent occurrence in Burma, as in Tongking. But it was to prevent China from lending her aid to revolt, even at the commencement of the occupation, and enabled the British, during a necessarily critical period, to devote their entire attention to their rebellious subjects, unhampered by opposition from other quarters.

Such was the policy pursued by Great Britain during the period immediately follow-

ing the occupation, in dealing with the Burmese races, the religious and political authorities of the country and, lastly, with neighbouring powers who might exercise some influence on the internal politics of their new possession. This policy was, on the whole, well calculated to produce the desired effect, *i.e.*, the appeasement of popular prejudices. And yet, all this prudence and ingenuity might prove unavailing, if the conquerors failed to fulfil the chief of all conditions in the eyes of the conquered, that is, if they did not give them a suitable political *régime*.

CHAPTER IV.

THE POLITICAL RÉGIME.

Importance of this question—A "buffer State"—A Protectorate—Annexation.

As SOON as the conquest had been completed, and it had been decided to place Upper Burma under British influence, the most serious problem to face was undoubtedly how the country was to be governed. Nothing was of higher importance, both for the growth of pacification and for the future welfare of the new possession.

There were three alternatives: the continuance, under certain fixed conditions, of the reigning dynasty; the establishment of a British protectorate; or annexation. Lord Dufferin, in a Memorandum already quoted reviewed and discussed all three propositions; we cannot do better than take him for guide.

Public opinion both in England, and in India, was in favour of the plan which would entail the smallest responsibilities on the

Empire, a view which even the Government fully endorsed. Bearing in mind the difficulties which his predecessors had both foreseen, and met with in 1852, Lord Dufferin wrote as follows to the Secretary of State for India:

"I am extremely reluctant to augment unnecessarily the Empire's obligations. Consequently, I have first of all considered the means of reducing our intervention to a minimum, by limiting it to precautionary measures sufficient merely to prevent any possibility of foreign influences, which might prove embarrassing to us, from predominating either overtly or covertly in the Valley of the Upper Irrawaddy. In other words, I have asked myself whether it would not be possible to transform Burma into a so-called "buffer State" (to use a now familiar expression). By such an arrangement, the native dynasty of the Alompra would have remained on the throne; the reigning prince would, like the Amir of Afghanistan, have been perfectly independent in all matters of internal administration; all that we should have claimed would have been the right of supervising the foreign relations.

"On subjecting this project to closer examination with the aid of further means of information, it has appeared to me to be impracticable. The kingdom of Ava posses-

ses neither the elasticity nor the power of resistance which a "buffer state" must necessarily possess. To insure by artificial means its independence on the great line of communication between our Burmese possessions and China, would be an expedient of more than doubtful efficacy. This state would certainly have proved an obstacle to the free exercise of commercial relations; and its weakness would be a perpetual temptation to the Chinese Government to seriously assert the shadowy, and, as I believe, unfounded claims which the Chinese Ambassador has put forward.

"This being so, can a semi-protected State be created on the frontiers of the Empire with any advantage to us? This principle of protection, even in its most attenuated form, entails responsibilities out of all proportion to the means at hand for confronting them, and leads naturally enough to our placing in the hands of him whom we protect the power to involve us in war against our will: to bring this about he has but to instigate his neighbours to aggressive acts which, whether justifiable or not, we should be forced to repel . . . Under these circumstances, our intervention would one day become necessary, and in carrying it out we should be disadvantageously situated, the military power and the revenues of the country being in

the hands of a ruler incapable alike of administering his revenues and of disciplining his troops.

"Further, this personage would, in all probability, be jealous of our intervention and might, just at the critical moment, prove unreasonable, ungovernable and, perhaps, disloyal. The country is not rich enough to support, over and above the expenses of the Court and of the king's army, the cost of a British army; and, as we certainly should not wish to defend the frontier with men in our pay, it would be exposed to all the possibilities which I have indicated."

These objections coming from a man of just disposition and great experience caused the idea of a "buffer state" to be abandoned. But, "buffer" state and semi-protected state are but varieties of a type which was, in short, very acceptable; and, to continue, if the principle of imposing protection on the kingdom of Burma be once admitted, who was there to compel Great Britain to stop half-way? Why abide by the semi-protection mentioned by Lord Dufferin? Who was there to prevent the establishment of a real protectorate, instead of a "buffer state"; the maintenance of the reigning dynasty and the native officials, with a British Resident at their side to control both interior administration, and foreign affairs?

This solution seemed admirably suited to the situation. The Burmese, or at least many of them, wished that their traditional form of government should be retained. Those who were consulted, almost unanimously declared that a "titular king," a "king in name" (such were the expressions used) would meet with absolute obedience on the part of his subjects. True, the Queen, and certain of the Ministers were hated; but King Theebaw, or any other of his race, would be popular. His accession would cause the dacoits to lay aside their arms, and would insure final Pacification. As to the administration, the British would themselves carry it on in his name, and as seemed to them good, through the medium of some wise administrator, such as, for instance, Colonel Sladen, who was so well acquainted with Burmese affairs, and who would exert an irresistible influence over the king, his councillors, and his Ministers.

Such were the whispered suggestions that reached Lord Dufferin's ear, and which could not fail, burdened as he was at the time with so many responsibilities, to strongly impress his mind. He was naturally rather inclined to accept an arrangement of this kind. He had seen the system working in India, under his personal observation, in a certain number of native States, and on

reaching Mandalay he found a form of Government provisionally established, similar to that which had been recommended to him, without the king, indeed, (who from the very first had been sent a captive to Rangoon) but with his former Council of State presided over by Colonel Sladen himself.

However, in spite of so many reasons for adopting the idea of a protectorate, he considered it his duty to reject it. A protectorate, in the main, necessitates two distinct powers each capable of fulfilling distinct duties: the protector who serves as intermediary between foreign powers and the *protégé;* the *protégé* who serves as intermediary between the protector and the native population. It lies with these two to maintain peace at home, and abroad. For peace with foreign countries the British certainly offered their *protégés* sufficient guarantee; but, in return, they were anxious to ascertain whether these *protégés* could guarantce them peace at home. Now, they deemed this protected Government incapable for all time of fulfilling its obligations.

In fact, not one of those who, according to the definition of the protectorate, would be called upon to exert influence over the population, had retained sufficient control over them. And firstly, no further reliance was to be placed on King Theebaw who by

his cruelties had stirred up a party against himself in the country, and by his over-prompt submission had alienated the rest. The other Alompra were little more than degenerate princes, and those who formed the exception to the rule, were either too far compromised or too hostile to Great Britain to justify any reliance being placed in them. One of them was the prince Myn-Goon whose antecedents were known to all our Foreign Office officials, and who at that time was living on French charity at Pondicherry waiting for an opportunity to overthrow the reigning monarch. The others, five or six in number, were wandering about the jungles at the head of bands of dacoits, and derived even less advantage from their title of prince than from that of robber-chief. Thus, to begin with, the king was wanting, who was to be the 'poll-bolt' of the protectorate, or at the very least the nail on which to hang the ensign.

Equally wanting was an aristocracy to rally the nation around it.

In these Oriental countries, birth and hereditary right do not suffice either to found or to perpetuate an aristocracy: to this end two further conditions are requisite: riches and knowledge. Now, throughout the vast expanse of the Kingdom of Burma, there is no one that can be called rich: its popula-

tion is too sparsely scattered, does not settle down on the land sufficiently and lacks industry. Consequently, everyone has but scanty means of subsistence. The king's favour, and the nomination to posts which are lucrative through the opportunities for extortion which they afford, are almost the only means of attaining wealth, and they are means of too precarious a nature to admit of the foundation of substantial positions. And no aristocracy can exist without a substratum of wealth.

It is true, with certain peoples, near neighbours of the Burmese, the aristocracy of intellect surpasses that of money, and, perhaps, that of birth also. But in Burma, though in bygone days it possessed a noble and power ul civilisation, learning is not so highly considered; and the educational system there is productive of a general level which is simply universal mediocrity. Nearly all the Burmese go through a course of priestly tuition, and the very recruitment and status of these priests is such as to necessarily render them inferior instructors.

The priests are, in fact, not, as in other countries, a separate class, a corporate body whom a glorious record in the past compels to perform rude and noble tasks: the Buddhist priesthood is, as I have already intimated, so inseparably linked to the nation

that every man, at least at one period of his life, is bound to don the poongi's (monk's) garb, and that, inversely, every poongi can doff his garb at pleasure. The renunciation of the monastic vows is characteristically termed in Burmese "to become a man again." Under these circumstances the Burmese priests possess neither the proud zeal of powerful castes nor yet the envious spirit of oppressed minorities; their knowledge does not rise above a certain level, and they themselves do not rise above the average level of the nation from which they spring, and which they, in their turn, serve to constitute.

In a country where there is neither prince to occupy the throne, nor aristocracy to which the task of influencing the lower classes may be confided, the nation becomes the sole factor in the political situation: thus it was with the nation alone that the British had to deal, without any intermediary. This led straight to annexation pure and simple, to the incorporation of Upper Burma with the great British Empire.[1]

[1] It still remained, however, a debatable point, whether, when once added to Lower Burma, the entire province should form a mere province of India, or an independent colony, or, lastly, an adjunct to the Straits Settlements and the Malay Peninsula. (See the letters published in the *Times* of 27th August, 1st, 12th and 17th September 1888, notably that of M. Chantoon, a

It was a grave step, and one which might be pregnant with danger.[2] Great difficulty was experienced in ascertaining what the wishes of the nation really were. The Buddhist priests maintained an attitude of indifference, and, provided their privileges were not infringed, would recognise established authority; whilst the Mussulmans, whose number was not insignificant, were distinctly in favour of annexation by the British with whom their co-religionists in India were so well satisfied.

The majority of the population had no distinct leaning to one side or the other. Doubtless, by tradition, they were attached to their kings. But, in short, what they desired above all else was security and order, and the government which gave them these two benefits would, in their estimation, be the legitimate Government. Lastly, there was —and this very closely resembles what we have seen in Tongking—a whole class of

Burmese by birth, who advocates the separation of Upper and Lower Burma, the institution of several independent provinces governed by Burmese under the control of British Superintendents, etc.)

[2] There was even a tendency to exaggerate the danger. It was said, for instance, that the annexation of Burma would have a disquieting effect on the feudatory princes of India. Lord Dufferin clearly proved in the Memorandum referred to above, that this fear was chimerical.

petty officials who, foreseeing a possibility of profitable service under British rule, were eager for annexation, and, when interrogated by the Viceroy, invariably replied that such was also the wish of the nation.[1]

In the end, annexation was decided on. "I am convinced," Lord Dufferin said on this occasion, "that annexation pure and simple, with a direct administration of the provinces by British officials, offers us the best chance of insuring peace and security both to Burma, and to our political and commercial interests. This decision doubtless entails upon us serious charges and responsibilities, and will cause us, for some time to come, many anxieties, and burden us with many expenses. But no other alternative is open to us; and in the end, I doubt not that we

[1] A British officer, who had travelled through the whole of Upper Burma, was not of this opinion. "It is pretended," he says in substance, "that the Burmese desire annexation because they expect great things from a good administration such as ours would be. Now, I have just travelled through the whole of Upper Burma: the roads and the houses there are in better order than those of Lower Burma. The inhabitants are contented, and do not appear to me to have been longing for our advent." This was confirmed at a later date. (See "The Times" of 24th August 1890.) Cf., however, as representing a contrary view, the narrative of another correspondent of "The Times" who, in the district of the ruby mines, found the roads abominable, and the inhabitants totally destitute. ("The Times," 2nd September 1890.)

shall be indemnified for a temporary period of trouble and annoyance by increased security in our districts of Lower Burma, and on our Eastern frontier, as well as by the development of the trade and general resources of the new province."

When once a decision had been arrived at, the situation was simplified. The British now found themselves face to face with the nation; that is to say, as matters stood, with a multitude of interests, private, isolated, and distinct. It was no longer a question of having recourse either to intrigue or to bribes. There was no class to gain over by benefits, no caste to conciliate by privileges; but something much more difficult to manage: the mass of Burmese subjects. And these were only to be conciliated by a just, wise, and progressive administration.

PART II.

THE ADMINISTRATION.—LAWS AND OFFICIALS.

CHAPTER V.

LEGISLATION.

The Laws of India—Civil and Penal Codes—Acclimatisation of the Laws—The Laws of India in Lower Burma—The Laws of Lower Burma in Upper Burma—Differences between the various régimes applied to different parts of the province.

NOTHING, perhaps, affords a better illustration of the British system of colonial administration than the legislative task accomplished in Burma. This task may be described, in one word, *i.e.*, acclimatisation. It consisted in paving the way in Lower Burma for the acclimatisation of the laws of India, and then preparing Upper Burma for its acclimatisation to the laws of Lower Burma.

The laws of India would do credit to any community. Such is the opinion of Sir Henry Sumner Maine, who is a competent judge; and also of Sir John Strachey, who has written the best book extant on India. [1]

The criminal laws are notably marvellous. It is a very remarkable fact that the British display greater anxiety to possess good criminal, than good civil laws. There appear to me to be two reasons which account for this. The penal legislation of semi-civilised countries is characterised by a cruelty which is revolting to highly civilised nations, and to none more so than the British nation. It cannot indeed be said of the British that they are champions of humanity. But they are opposed to cruel ideas, especially such as are incorporate in the laws. And this being their character, they naturally endeavoured, with due precautions of which traces still exist, to introduce into India, as well as into all their colonies, a more humane penal code. That is one of the reasons alluded to above, and the other is this. In all criminal cases, society in general is at war with one individual. Now, the British—knowing full well the danger of measures which partake of too

[1] See the translation by M. Harmand, Minister Plenipotentiary, and the excellent introduction with which he prefaces it: "L'Inde," 1 vol. 8vo. Paris, Société d'éditions scientifiques, 1891.

repressive a character—apparently fear lest the judge who represents society may espouse its cause, with which he naturally is in sympathy, too ardently against the individual; and their fears are increased when civilised England forms this society on the one hand, and the individual represents primitive Asia. They therefore, deem it advisable, in view of such a difficulty, to provide against the strong partiality which must exist in the mind of the British citizen. Contrary to their usual practice, they trust more to the letter of the law than to the judge, and take infinite pains in limiting both his mode of procedure, and the penalties which he has the power to inflict. In civil cases, on the other hand, the dispute is most frequently between two private persons. The judge is then supposed to be impartial, for, in this instance, partiality would evidently be culpable. Consequently, less hesitation is shown in extending his powers: it is frequently left to him to interpret and apply the law, and, when occasion arises, to add to it if necessary.

And this is what is so strikingly noticeable in India. The work of criminal legislation is complete: the Penal Code[1] drawn

[1] This Code, which was first of all applied to that part of India which is under the direct control of the Crown, has, by degrees, with the consent of the native

up by a commission presided over by Lord Macaulay, can vie with any existing judicial enactment; and the Code of Criminal Procedure, as well as the Evidence Act afford ample security. On the other hand, the enactments relating to Civil Procedure are incomplete. A few years since, a Code of Civil Procedure was completed; and a general law pertaining to contracts was passed: but the rest is little more than mere matters of detail and organisation.

For this, however, no blame can be imputed to the British Government. It would have been an easy matter for the latter to impose the whole mass of British civil legislation on the country. Assuredly we Frenchmen should have done so. We imagine that our codes are adapted in their entirety to every locality; accordingly we have introduced them with hardly any alteration into the four corners of the globe.[1] The British are more

princes, been introduced into the feudatory States, such as that of Nizam, etc. Cf. especially the legislative work of the Maharajah of Bhavnagar, 1892.

[1] This custom, which dates from the monarchy, was perfectly explicable in former times. Our old colonies, the "New France" of which Richelieu dreamed, had to be populated, and were effectively populated by numerous French colonists, who naturally took with them their provincial customs. As to the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, where such existed, they had—always according to the ideas of the time—to be converted, and made French subjects. As a consequence,

cautious. In their opinion legislation should differ in different latitudes, and every country requires laws suited to its special circumstances. In such a country as India, the difficulty is greatly increased by the diversity of races and religions. This diversity prohibits uniform legislation and renders codification well-nigh impossible. This is why Great Britain has confined herself to legalising religious precepts here and local customs there, whilst governments, instead of directing their efforts to the enactment of laws, have aimed rather at the recruitment of judges.

To all appearance a legislation alike so humane and so cautious might, without inconvenience, have been transferred bodily to Lower Burma, and even supposing some scruples had arisen—as was the case—at the time of the first conquest, these scruples would, at any rate, have ceased to exist after long years of rule. The British have occupied a portion of Lower Burma since 1826, and another since 1852, *i. e.*, for 65 years in the one case, and for 40 years in

French laws were quite naturally applicable to them. To-day, our colonies are, for the most part, no longer colonies, but *possessions*, and we have relinquished the idea of converting, and naturalising the aborigines. Since then, the legal *régime* of that time has become an anachronism.

the other. But although so long a period has elapsed, during which the work of assimilation must have made continual progress, the laws in force in Burma still differ from those of the rest of India. They differ very essentially in many respects.

To begin with, there are special laws only applicable to Burma. Some are laws which are adapted exclusively to the customs of the province, in view of the exigencies of the country; others are native customs which have received legal sanction. Thus civil rank, marriages, religious questions, inheritance, are all regulated by local custom. "In all such questions," to quote the law entitled the *Lower Burma Courts Act* of 1889—observe the date—"the law applicable will be the Buddhist law, if the parties are Buddhists; the Mohammedan law, if the parties are Mohammedans; the Hindu law, if the parties are Hindus; unless these laws have been decidedly altered or abrogated, or are opposed to some legalised custom in Lower Burma." This proviso is a very natural one; a similar proviso is met with in nearly all the provinces of the Indian Empire. It is the application of the Indian legislative principle: the adapting of laws to the various countries and populations.

But now comes something still more curious and instructive. The codes and general laws of India: the penal code, the code

of criminal procedure, the code of civil procedure, the law of contracts, etc., have indeed been promulgated in Lower Burma, but only after certain modifications had been introduced, which the state of the province appeared to render necessary. Thus, both the mode of procedure and the administration of justice have been much simplified. Nor is this all; even in this simplified form they have not been made use of throughout the entire extent of Lower Burma, but merely in the districts which have reached the highest state of civilisation. The other districts have been submitted to a totally different legal *régime*, represented almost entirely by the two laws which are famous throughout India: the *Scheduled Districts Act* of 1874, and the Statute Victoria 33, Chapter 3, Section 1.

The Indian *Scheduled Districts Act* grants special conditions to certain specially designated districts. These districts are, as a rule, mountainous regions, or bordering on the frontier, or are inhabited by a population which is less civilised or else turbulent, or, lastly, by neighbours of the latter. In these districts the *Scheduled Districts Act* confers on the local government the power of selecting from the existing Indian Laws such as shall, either wholly or in part, remain, or be put in force. Special provi-

sion sanctioned by the Governor in Council, and inserted in the Gazette is all that is necessary for this purpose. Further, this same Act confers on the local Government the power of nominating the executive and the judges, and of estimating both their competency and the (simplified) mode of procedure to be observed by them.

Stat. Victoria 33, Chapter 3, Section 1, goes still further. It reasons that the existing laws, even though thus adapted, would but imperfectly answer to the requirements of these Scheduled Districts, and empowers the local Government, with the previous approval of the Governor-General in Council, to make special regulations for them, virtually equivalent to laws, but which do not require the sanction of the legislature.

Such are in outline the features of the legislation of Lower Burma. With such a multiplicity of precautions, and with so ingenious and elastic a machinery as that provided by the *Scheduled Districts Act* and the *Statute Victoria 33, Chapter 3, Section 1*, it would seem as if the whole of these laws might have been put in force *de plano* on the very day that the British entered Upper Burma. Nothing of the sort occurred, however: the new province was subjected to a *régime* of special regulations which could admit of constant modification and could be

adapted *de die in diem* to the existing situation.

Lord Dufferin in the Memorandum addressed to the Secretary of State for India, (to which I have already alluded), in which he recommends the annexation of Burma, furthermore added this express condition: "In the present state of affairs no steps should be taken to put in force in the province any portion of the laws of India. I would suggest, (he adds), that the Secretary of State for India should, by an order in Council, declare the *Statute Victoria 33, Chapter 3 Section 1* applicable to the whole of Upper Burma, with the exception, however, of the Shan States. This would admit of the local administration formulating a set of simple regulations which after being submitted for approval to the Governor-General, would embrace all matters to be placed on a well-defined legal basis: such as the administration of justice, the powers of the judges and those of the police, and the levy of imposts. These regulations should be formulated in such a manner as to leave large discretionary powers to the local administration, so as to enable it to arrange all matters of detail by means of decrees to be amended as the course of time, or the dictates of their own experience should require it. In formulating these regulations the Indian Code might be

taken as a model, but only so far as practicable; for the present, at any rate, not only would anything so complete as the Indian judicial system be unnecessary, but even any steps which might be taken with a view to its introduction, would be prejudicial."

These wise recommendations, a model of foresight and broad-mindedness, were adopted. The Secretary of State declared the two laws referred to above, applicable to Upper Burma. In virtue of the powers thereby conferred upon them, the local authorities, with the approval of the Governor-General in Council, gave the province a summary legislation, which amply sufficed for its primary needs. At the same time they were drawing up a more complete legislative scheme. They worked at this so successfully that in the month of August, 1886, they were able to promulgate a new law, entitled the *Upper Burma Laws Act*, which is still the Code of that part of the province. Uniting this law to those in force in the Lower province, the legislative *régime* of Burma, as a whole, may thus be summarised:—

Burma is divided, as regards the laws applicable thereto, into five regions. The first comprises the greater portion of old British Burma, the laws of which have already been described: with the exception of the deviations mentioned, the legislation is similar to

that in force in the rest of India; the second comprises the greater portion of old Upper Burma, the legislation of which was determined by the law of the 24th September, 1886: this legislation is composed either of special laws, or of laws or portions thereof borrowed in their entirety, or with necessary modifications, from the judicial systems of India or Lower Burma; it is, on the whole, infinitely more simple and less formal than that of either of those countries. The third region comprises certain districts of Lower Burma to which it was not thought possible to apply the legislation in force in that part of the province, and for which, by virtue of the *Scheduled Districts Act*, a less complex legislative system was elaborated, which, however, does not affect all alike; the fourth comprises the districts of Upper Burma which were placed under an exceptional *régime*, either more complete and more formal than the ordinary *régime* of Upper Burma —such as the district of Mandalay,—or, on the contrary, still more concise and simple,—such as a large number of districts bordering on the Shan States or on the frontier; the fifth comprises the Shan States, in which the legislation is still more rudimentary.

But even all the above distinctions give but an imperfect idea of the elaborate and wise complexity of the legislation. The dis-

tricts called Scheduled Districts possess, notwithstanding their uniform denomination, and in virtue of the powers conferred on the local authorities, legislative systems which differ one from the other, and each of which may, in addition, vary from day to day according to circumstances. Nay, more; those of Upper Burma approach a certain type, those of Lower Burma another; so that the law of the 24th September, 1886, provided for the case, which was more than once realised, of its being considered desirable to transfer a district or a portion of a district from Upper to Lower Burma, and *vice versâ*, so as to render applicable to it the legislation in force in such other district.

The object of such a multiplicity of distinctions is, as may be surmised, but the desire of avoiding two dangers of a contrary nature. One is that of imposing on the populations a legal *régime* which may either be too complicated for them, or may offend their religious scruples or their customs, and of rushing prematurely into costly, superfluous, and often even embarrassing organisations. The other danger is that of leaving —on the pretext that the time had not yet arrived—a whole country for several years without fixed laws or a regularly constituted administration, and requiring an arbitrary solution—of which the British in their rela-

tions with one another have a horror—of all the difficulties. Whatever complication may be entailed by these distinctions, they have the effect of securing the above twofold result: and that is the main point. Apart from this, it may be urged against them that they demand greater attainments and more tact on the part of the executive and judicial officers. The British have long since overcome this difficulty.

Note to Legislation of Lower Burma (p. 213).—

The objection has, however, been made to this legislation that it is too complicated for those to whom it is applied. In a series of letters addressed to *The Times* in August and September, 1888, a native of British Burma, Mr Chantoon, recently appointed Chief Justice in the *Court of Small Causes* at Rangoon, declares (cf. notably the letter of 18th September) that this legislation is too advanced for at least one-half of the Burmese and, though good in itself, is of no efficacy. He holds that its application to Upper Burma is inadvisable. The two provinces should (he opines) be kept entirely separate; Upper Burma should be allowed to accomplish an evolution "of some centuries" before the laws and the governmental and administrative forms of India and of Lower Burma are introduced; meanwhile the national customs would serve as a guide: the legislation should be but a compilation of the laws of Buddha and Manu. (See, on this subject, the chapter entitled "The Laws and Law-courts of India" in Sir John Strachey's work "India.")

CHAPTER VI.

RECRUITMENT OF OFFICIALS.

Advantages of a good selection of officials—Various methods of selection: by competitive examinations and influence—Combination of these methods in France—The method employed for obtaining a supply of colonial officials.

THERE is, perhaps, no body of officials in the world who are chosen with greater care or with happier results than the officials of India.[1] I should hesitate to extend this encomium to the officials of all the British

[1] In the present survey, we shall throughout confine ourselves exclusively to the "Civil Service," *i. e.*, the officials of high rank belonging to one of the two branches, executive and judicial, a veritable civil staff-corps, whose functions may not inaccurately be compared with those of our 'Residents' in Indo-China. To be quite complete, we might describe—and it would be a very instructive subject—the methods of recruiting the technical services, such as public works, telegraphs, forests, railways, etc.; but this would occupy far too much of our space.

possessions; but in India the method of recruitment has been organised with a host of precautions, and furnishes a supply of men of such merit as to defy comparison.

There are two methods by which a Government can obtain a supply of officials.

One is that of examinations: candidates are invited to give a proof of their talents, and with rare exceptions are chosen in the order of merit determined by the examination. The other method is that of free selection by competent authorities. Both methods have their advantages. If the said competent authorities always owed their competency to their knowledge as well as to their position, the officials freely selected by them would be very superior to those selected by open competition. They would not, in fact, be hampered in their choice by any of the impediments which the competitive system encounters or gives rise to. They could choose men who had already exceeded the limit of age, or also such as had given a tardy proof of their merits in other vocations; above all, they could take into account not merely technical knowledge, but also intellectual and moral qualifications or physical fitness, the possession of which by a candidate can only be certified with difficulty by the prescribed tests.

Unfortunately, the parliamentary or repre-

sentative form of government now in vogue almost all over the world, affords no guarantee that the authorities who are competent in virtue of their office, are so also in virtue of their merits. For this reason competitive examinations, in spite of their many inconveniences, are still preferable to free selection, or to call it by its true name, selection by influential interest.

As a matter of fact, no Government thinks of confining itself exclusively to one alone of these two methods of selection. They all make use of both methods conjointly, and differ from each other only in their proportionate use of one or the other method. One has more recourse to the competitive system, the other, to free selection.

With us a very curious phenomenon is met with in regard to this point. The majority of our high functionaries are only appointed after they have furnished repeated proofs of their abilities. Certain of our departments, in fact the most important among them, derive their best officials from the competitive system. Thus, the Public Works Department, the Educational, and Financial Departments require their engineers, their professors, their inspectors to pass complicated tests as a proof not merely of their merits, but of their superiority. And, except in special cases or under extraordi-

nary circumstances, no one can become a professor, an inspector, or an engineer unless he passes these competitive examinations.

Other departments which are not so exacting, reserve, indeed, the right of nominating exceptionally to their higher posts, persons who have not passed a competitive examination, but they nevertheless adhere to the latter test in the case of candidates who are commencing their career; this is the method adopted by the Council of State, the Court of Exchequer, etc.

And these examinations and tests are no mere child's play; they are tests of the highest class, and those who pass them are almost master-minds. Our engineers, as a scientific body, are unrivalled in any country in the world; our educational department is at least on a par with those of the most cultured nations; as to our financial inspectors, their merits are so highly appreciated that private establishments vie with the State in offering high emoluments for their services.

Thus, in France, the supply of officials is, as a general rule, obtained by competitive examinations. To this rule, there is but one exception of any importance; and that is with regard to the candidates for the post of prefect. This exception is, however, in reality one of those which may be said to

prove the rule. What are the chief qualifications requisite in a prefect? Are they those of the lawyer, the financier, the engineer, etc? Not at all. Doubtless a prefect has to occupy himself with law, finance, public works, education, and relief, and an absolute ignorance of any one of these subjects would be prejudicial to the State. But what would be still more prejudicial would be a lack of political acumen. A prefect, at least according to our French notions, is above all things a political agent. Knowledge of law, of finance, or of applied mathematics are not so essentially requisite to a good prefect as the combination of various talents which might very easily be passed over by examiners, and the possession of which the Minister of the Interior reserves to himself the right of verifying, on his own responsibility, in candidates for posts which he fills up. Thus, the absence of a competitive examination for the important office of prefect is amply justified; and, in a general way, it may well be said that, in France, the higher grade of officials is mainly recruited by competition.

Nevertheless—and here the curious phenomenon to which we have referred, is noticeable—this is true only in regard to the home officials. Take for instance, the professors in our scholastic institutions. Their imme-

diate superior is the Inspector, over whom are Inspectors General; the latter again are controlled by a superior Council, the Chief of the Department being the Minister of Public Instruction. Their duties are confined within strict limits, they possess but the smallest liberty of independent action, but can clear up any doubtful matter in a few hours by reference to higher quarters. And yet they have to give a proof of professional capacity by passing a formidable examination for admission to the service.

The engineers, who are controlled by an equally formidable establishment, and the majority of whom will in the whole course of their lives have no more important works to supervise than such as would be almost beneath the dignity of an ordinary road-surveyor,—the engineers have to undergo examinations, the very preparation for which makes them *savants*. I might say as much for many other of the home officials.

Our colonial officials, on the other hand, who, when far from home without any advice and sometimes uncontrolled, are required to exercise duties of the most delicate and varied nature amongst peoples of whom they have little knowledge, and who are entrusted with very extensive powers, are admitted to the service *de plano*, without any competition or guarantee. It is true that

several zealous and distinguished Under-Secretaries of State have repeatedly issued instructions and regulations regarding the nomination and promotion of these officials; it is also true that they have instituted examinations and minutely prescribed the subjects thereof. But excepting that for the commissariat and the higher grade, bodies which are recruited in a totally different manner, the subjects set are childish, and the examinations a mere mockery. We now have, it is true, a Colonial School which is undoubtedly an immense advance on the previous state of affairs; but apart from its being still defective in certain respects—notably in that candidates are admitted without examination—its period of activity has as yet been too short to admit of the attainment of any appreciable results. So that, at the present moment, in spite of instructions, resolutions, orders, examinations and examination papers, it may be asserted—I have elsewhere proved it by an abundance of expert evidence—that, save in rare exceptions, the French colonial service owes its best officials, not to examinations or competition, but to a selection made on individual responsibility, *i.e.*, purely to interest.

As a contrast to the above, it may not, perhaps, be unprofitable to inquire how the British have, chiefly by means of competitive

examinations, obtained their efficient supply of officials for India, or properly speaking, for the Indian province of Burma, which is now under discussion.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OFFICIALS OF BRITISH INDIA.

Political theory upon which the recruitment of officials is based—Two methods of recruitment: open competition and free selection—The Covenanted Civil Service and competition; drawbacks to the competitive system; how they were met and counteracted; examiners and examination-papers—Necessity of an extensive general education—Admission and "admissibility"—Period of probation—the time when candidates devote themselves to the study of special subjects—The Uncovenanted Civil Service, and free selection—One method the completion of the other.

THE method by which the officials of India are recruited is based on a certain number of—I do not venture to say—principles, but statements and even hypotheses, which in the eyes of the British, after long experience, have acquired the value of actual principles. Let us proceed to indicate them in their strict order.

India is to Great Britain a possession of

the highest importance. Good government and administration are essential for the tranquillity of the Mother Country, for the good order of her finances, and also for the development of her wealth. India is not a nation, nor yet a country. It is a collection of a hundred dissimilar countries, a juxtaposition of a hundred different peoples, the majority of whom have nothing in common: neither language, religion, customs, needs nor aspirations. This infinite subdivision, which affords such facilities for rule, is, on the contrary, the cause of innumerable difficulties to the government and the executive administration.

From the very fact of its complex nature India can only be ruled, and especially administered, by those who have thoroughly studied it. Such a study is a lengthy and difficult matter, and moreover, is insufficient by itself. The peoples of India are so far distant, their modes of thought so different to ours, that even a man who has a knowledge of their history and their manners and customs, and is conversant with the idioms of their language, will be unequal to the task unless he also be a psychologist. But knowledge and its practical application—for nothing less than this is necessary—are gifts only possessed by a select few. The officials of India must there-

fore be recruited from the *élite* of the nation. The problem one has to solve is how to attract this *élite*? Some allurement must be held out to induce them to undertake a course of study which at the outset is irksome, and later, to submit to years of expatriation. This allurement will be the certainty of an interesting, honourable, sometimes even glorious and on the whole lucrative career. But these advantages which are offered to the *élite* are bound to attract many who by no means belong to it: the important point is, then, to separate them, and to find a criterion whereby such a separation may be effectually accomplished. The desired criterion will chiefly take the nature of severe competitive examinations, tests such as are really worthy of an *élite*; and in a lesser way a selection made with discrimination by experienced persons from men of ability wherever they may be revealed.

Such is, briefly narrated, the system and its logical basis. Let us now proceed to consider more fully the details of this method.

The plan of governing a tropical country by the *élite* of a European nation seems at first sight chimerical, but in reality, of all the problems to be faced but one presented any real difficulty. This was, how to obtain by competition the imperative supply of men of such varied and needful qualifications.

A competitive examination furnishes as a rule only a single guarantee: viz., that at a given time, a given individual possessed certain necessary acquirements. Now this guarantee was here totally inadequate. Competition would fall short of what was required of it unless it certified that the candidate possessed the faculty of learning, as well as that of comparing, and judging. Even this, however, was not sufficient: it must also afford information as to his physical fitness, his morals, and his character. So many requirements are apparently excessive and incapable of being attained to, but the British thought otherwise. They reckoned on being able to discover a method of selecting examiners, of formulating examination-papers, and of organising tests which would supply all the necessary information respecting candidates.

An examiner is too often but a very learned man, a great specialist, and extremely uninterested. He sees the candidate for an hour or possibly a week, hands him his certificate, and then loses sight of him altogether. Examiners for the Indian Civil Service are not professional scholars: they are usually retired Indian officials who, as a reward for their merit, are appointed Civil Service Commissioners. They are not specialists: during the years that they have been on active duty, they have gained an insight into all

the details of the Service. Nor are they uninterested: having spent half their life in India, they take a keen interest in its prosperity. Their part in these Examinations is no mere temporary one; they are in no hurry to quit their post and forget both competition and candidates: part of their duty consists in the drawing up of examination-papers and the arrangement of all details connected with the competition, while they are expected at the same time to acquire a personal and intimate knowledge of each individual candidate. To them do the candidates apply for permission to compete; by them they are submitted to a previous test, a sort of inquiry into their physical and moral qualifications, during which a preliminary and rapid opinion is formed as to their health, and their character; and the candidates, after passing the preliminary examination, and during the period of probation, will have to convince them of their diligence, and of their physical and moral soundness; and lastly from them, after passing the further examination, will they receive the famous certificate, without which the Secretary of State for India would refuse to accept them as officials in his Department. These Commissioners who have thus for months followed and watched the candidates, may surely be considered qualified either to reject or to admit them.

Moreover, the very manner in which they regulate the tests and formulate the examination-papers is an additional aid to their zeal and their perspicacity.

The competition, as we have cursorily remarked, consists of two tests. The British call them: Open competition (the preliminary examination), and Final examination (for the candidates selected at the open competition). The first corresponds very nearly to what with us is termed "admissibility", the second to our "admission". But—and this is a characteristic feature of the British system—the examination for *admission* (or *Anglice*, final examination) does not take place until long after that of *admissibility* (*Anglice*, preliminary examination). Meanwhile the candidates declared admissible (selected) become probationers. They are on their trial for a year, and what is required of them to successfully pass through the ordeal, follows:

Primarily, they are bound to keep healthy and be well-behaved which,—take it as you may—is no trifling matter for young people of twenty years of age. Anything having a tendency to impair their health, or to tarnish their character, and which would result in their being less capable or less worthy of the part which they are destined to play, might at the close of their probation lead to

the certificate of fitness being withheld. And these are no mere empty threats: the very Civil Service Commissioners who examined them in the Open Competition carefully watch them during the probationary period, and will again be their examiners in the final examination.

Again, they have to render themselves proficient in horsemanship. They are submitted to a very searching inspection by a cavalry officer, and if this officer reports them unable to ride long distances, positive journeys, they are rejected as unfit for the Indian Civil Service.

Lastly, they have to take up special subjects. In fact, the preliminary examination which is the stepping-stone to probation is characterised by two peculiarities. The papers set, though very lengthy, comprised, so to speak, no technical subjects; and, in addition to this, not one of the subjects is obligatory. This is a very original idea, and one deserving of special mention.

It dates from 1854, and owes its origin to a Commission of Reform presided over by Lord Macaulay.

Lord Macaulay has presided over more than one Commission on Indian affairs, and his influence, notably in educational matters, has not been invariably beneficial. But in the case which we are now considering the

fairness and practical intelligence displayed in his proposals could not be too highly commended. He it was who, if not the first, was, at any rate, the most lucid exponent of the ambitious design, to which I have already alluded, of governing India by the *élite* of the British nation. But where—to take up his argument—is this *élite* to be found? Doubtless in those colleges, at those Universities, through which all that is most distinguished in the nation has passed, and is passing year by year. Therefore, our duty plainly lies in endeavouring to attract to the Service the best scholars of Oxford, and Cambridge, and other Universities, the young men who have just taken their first degree, and have not yet definitely fixed on their future vocation.

And how shall we induce them to fix on this Indian career? By smoothing the path which leads thereto. Let us consider for a moment what our present examinations are. They bristle with special subjects and technical knowledge, and their nature is such that not one of our Bachelors of Arts can dream of competing without a long course of preparation. There lies the obstacle which diverts from us such a wealth of intelligence, and which it is incumbent upon us to remove. We must formulate our examination papers in such a way that the classical *curriculum*

of our Universities may constitute *per se* an almost complete course of preparation for our open competition. The prize-man of Oxford must be, so to speak, welcomed by us in just the same way as he would be spontaneously welcomed in any other quarter; the man who fails to pass our tests must with the same intellectual knowledge which we require, be able to follow twenty other professions and not find to his regret, after devoting so considerable a portion of his time to us, that the path he had followed led to us only, and nowhere else. The offer of such inducements is bound to attract the vigorous and flourishing youth of England, whose co-operation is indispensable to us.

Such was the line of Lord Macaulay's argument, or the one which he is credited with. And when it was objected that examination-papers of such a nature would afford no security, and that officials so recruited would possess no technical qualifications, his usual reply was recently recalled to my memory by the apparent paradox in M. Fouillée's "Reforme de l'enseignement." "The scientific mind?" remarks M. Fouillée, "nothing is better adapted to reveal it than a well-rendered translation." And the same with Macaulay: "Security? I know of none more reliable than that of a sound general edu-

cation the best, the most liberal, the most finished that our country affords.[1]

"Experience has proved it: an education of this kind is the best preparation for any profession requiring the exercise of high intellectual faculties. It would be difficult to prove that such a preparation is less indispensable for an Indian Civil Servant than for a private person who intends to devote himself to a profession in England. The very reverse is the case. An Indian Civil Servant is in greater need of a good general education than any professional man living in England. The duties incumbent on even a very young Indian civilian are more important than those which ordinarily devolve on an English professional man. Moreover, a person engaged in a profession in his native land may, while conceding the foremost place to his occupation, continue to improve his mind by reading and conversing.

The Indian civilian is often, for a great

[1] From a recent perusal of the examination papers for the Open Competitions of the last few years, I think I may assert that, with rare exceptions, not one of the pupils of even our highest "lycées" could scrape through them, and that we should have to search among the licentiates of our Universities for candidates capable of successfully facing such ordeals. (See the annual publications, entitled *Open Competition and Final Examination for the Civil Service of India*).

portion of his life, stationed far from libraries, or the society of Europeans: it will therefore be especially difficult for him when he has reached a ripe age, to fill up by study any gaps in his earlier education".

This argument prevailed: the examination papers were drawn up in accordance with Lord Macaulay's views. Since 1854 they have been frequently remodelled, but the same spirit still pervades them. Consult the India Office List of 1891; look up the papers for the preliminary examination of 1891 and 1892, and you will find that a large proportion of them is devoted to literature, science in all its branches, history, and living languages; technical knowledge is very modestly represented: a few chapters of Indian History, the rudiments of Sanscrit or Arabic, and that is all. Special subjects are reserved for the later period of probation.

This probationary period for the study of special subjects and for general improvement is not an entirely novel idea to us Frenchmen. We stated just now that the preliminary examination which is the stepping-stone to probation, corresponds to what we call "admissibility": the period of probation corresponds to the term passed at our public schools, of which the "École Polytechnique" is at present the most advanced type; the examination at the close of this period cor-

responds to what we call the admission or better the egress examination; lastly, we shall meet with a final institution which corresponds to our "school of application". The British system does not therefore differ so materially from ours as might be supposed. Its originality chiefly consists in the ingenuity and prudence displayed in the details of its execution. We have just demonstrated this in regard to the papers for the preliminary examination; we shall have to prove it again in more than one particular.

It is a characteristic feature of the so-called probationary period that the probationer can spend it wherever he pleases. All that is required of him is that he should satisfactorily pass the final examination, so that he can prepare for the latter wherever seems best to him, either by studying at home, or at any school that he may choose.[1] Yet it is evidently to India's interest that this preparation should

[1] This system evidently possesses great advantages: it is an excellent means of decentralisation; families are thereby exempted from large pecuniary sacrifices, and lastly it allows the young men a good deal of independence and initiative. On the other hand, the (French) 'écoles d'application' have the advantage in other respects. In a 'school of application' for one special subject, where the pupils are continually brought into contact with specially selected professors, it is easier to instil into their minds the needful instruction, whilst at the same time a better knowledge can be obtained of their individual qualifications. The professors, and the principal

be as complete and thorough as possible. Indeed, it is thus possible to maintain a higher standard of study, and to admit none but officials of real merit. To attain this object, scholarships of £100 (formerly £300, when the term of probation was two years) are offered to candidates who are willing to go through a course of study at one of the Universities or at a specially designated College. These Universities and Colleges are distributed throughout the Kingdom, in England, Scotland, and Ireland, thus enabling the pupils to be at a short distance from home.

Whether the candidate pursues his course of study at the specified Colleges, or works at home, he still remains under the control of the Civil Service Commissioners with whom he is bound to keep up a relationship, at least a correspondence. The Commissioners make inquiries (formerly official, but now, apparently, purely perfunctory) as to their conduct, their state of health and physical development, and, at the end of the year of probation, they proceed with the final exam-

compare and classify the pupils; they become acquainted with the character, and the intellectual and moral capacity, of each individual; and can form an estimate of what each will be capable of accomplishing. These prognostications formed while the young men are still at school, have, I admit, their objectionable points, but are nevertheless not without their advantages.

ination which is to allow the probationer to become an actual Indian Civil Servant.

This final examination likewise merits a few words of explanation: it comprises subjects which are for the most part technical as well as obligatory, and thus differs in two respects from the preliminary examination.

In this preliminary examination, indeed, the Commission presided over by Lord Macaulay wished, as may be remembered, to give the candidates every chance. Opining that it was not sufficient that the subjects set in the examination-papers should resemble as closely as possible those comprised in the classical curriculum of the Universities, the Commission decided further that none of the subjects should be obligatory. These papers, then, (which, by the way, are very lengthy) are divided into four main divisions—science, literature, history, languages; and a large number of subdivisions; it is optional for the candidate to neglect this or that division, or even this or that subdivision, and to study merely what he pleases. As, however, in order to qualify, he must obtain a certain number of marks, it is obviously to his advantage to take up such a number of subjects as will insure his obtaining a sufficient total from the added quota of marks given for each subject. But apart from this necessity, there is nothing to influence his choice.

Though a British citizen, he may decline to be questioned on the history of his native country, and though a future Indian official, on Sanscrit or Arabic. He has only to answer, indeed, he is only questioned on the subjects he has previously named; moreover, in each subject he himself defines the range of his studies. Take History, for instance, even the History of England, he need not pretend to possess a knowledge of the entire course ranging from the year 800 to 1848; he selects an epoch, and on that epoch alone he offers himself for examination. On this particular epoch, however, the examiners sound him thoroughly. They inquire what books he has read, and taking into account the spirit in which they are written, they put him through a series of questions about characters and facts, requiring of him an account and a valuation of events and doctrines. And so it is with all the other subjects which he takes up.

The Civil Service Commissioners attach the highest importance to this method of procedure. They do not intend that a candidate should be able to scrape through by a mere superficial knowledge of any subject. One of the articles in the Regulations, though its wording is at first somewhat obscure and singular, reveals their actual intentions more clearly than anything we have hitherto stated.

It is Article 6, which runs thus: "The marks assigned to Candidates in each branch will be subject to such deduction as the Civil Service Commissioners may deem necessary, in order to secure that a Candidate be allowed no credit at all for taking up a subject in which he is a mere smatterer."

The framers of this article foresaw that the candidates might hit upon the following trick—if I may be allowed the expression—. Let us suppose that of the fifteen to twenty subjects which the examination-papers contain, the best prepared candidates have, on an average, selected six; that for each of these subjects to which a maximum number of, say, 500 marks are allotted—which would make the highest number obtainable 3000—these candidates obtain 400, or say in all 2,400 marks. A candidate of mediocre ability, who has a smattering of every subject, and a thorough knowledge of none, might, instead of six, take up twelve subjects; instead of obtaining 400 marks for each subject might obtain 200, and thus, equally with those who had worked harder, make up a total of 2,400. Or else he might take up three or four subjects which he had thoroughly studied and, in order to make up the required total, three or four others of which he had scarcely mastered the rudiments. In either case his little trick will

avail him nought. The Commissioners, as soon as they become aware of his imperfect knowledge of one or more subjects will subsequently reduce the number of marks allotted to him for the subjects best known. Let us say, for instance, that in Latin of which he has a good knowledge, he had obtained 750 out of a possible 800 marks; and, similarly, in chemistry 450 out of a possible 500; whereas in Greek or in Sanscrit, which subjects he had himself specially named, he has proved himself to be incompetent. On this account alone, the Commissioners will reduce his marks for Latin to 650, and those for chemistry to 300, which will prevent his passing.

What, then, is the object of this method which differs so largely from our own usual practice? The object is to avoid the ordinary commonplace results of examinations. Instead of proving that the candidate possesses a retentive memory and a docile mind, the aim in view is, to make sure of his sagacity and judgment. An effort is made to find out what he is capable of when he has to go to the root of a matter; what he will be able to do when thrown upon his own resources, and when, no longer a scholar under tutelage, he will have become a free and responsible agent.

Such is the preliminary examination. The

final examination which closes the probationary period, and on passing which the candidate obtains the certificate of fitness for service in India, is quite another matter: its subjects are both technical and, for the most part, obligatory. The preliminary examination admitted educated gentlemen to a period of probation; the probationary period opens up a career to experts, and such only. What is now required of them is entirely special knowledge: not a knowledge of general, English or Indian history; not a knowledge of law, whether Roman, English or Indian; nor yet of Sanscrit or Arabic alone, but of Persian, the language spoken at Mohammedan Courts, and of the vulgar tongue of the province where they are to be stationed: such as Hindustani, Burmese, etc. And these acquirements are no longer optional, they are almost all obligatory. In fact, it is no longer a question of testing the intellectual capacity of the candidate—that has already been ascertained—but of certifying his professional knowledge.

Finally, as if such a number of regulations might still prove inefficacious, and as a means of forming an accurate estimate of the candidate's value not merely as scholar but as man, exceptional importance is attributed to the *vivâ voce* portion of the examination. Originally, candidates had to un-

dergo a *vivâ voce* examination on certain subjects only: such as English, Greek and Latin; now, and since the year 1858, this has been extended to all subjects.

"We attach," the Civil Service Commissioners stated in a report issued some time since, "great importance to this test. The object of the *vivâ voce* examination is two-fold: to test the reality of the candidate's knowledge, and, further, to bring into play those qualities respecting which an examination conducted in writing can elicit little, if any, information: viz., to ascertain whether he is quick-witted, self-reliant, and a possessor of moral courage."

And, twenty years after this first report, a special Commission added the following: "The views of our predecessors meet with our unanimous approval. The *vivâ voce* examination affords a skilful and conscientious examiner the opportunity of ascertaining whether the candidate's written answers are due to a very retentive memory or to a thorough knowledge of the subjects which he has studied. At the same time it brings to light in the candidate qualities of another sort, which are, however, of considerable importance for future Indian Civil Servants. When it is considered what an exceptional position they occupy, and what a wide range of interests is confided to their care, it may

be said without any exaggeration that an error of principle in regard to their selection, whether it be due to an imperfect knowledge of their subjects, or to partiality on the part of the examiner, is bound to lead to results, the deleterious effects of which will only become apparent when they are beyond the reach of remedy."[1]

After the adoption of so many precautionary measures in selecting these officials it might be supposed that on their arrival in India they would be permitted at once to commence their first campaign against the enemy, by being appointed to some post up country. The Civil Service Commission and the Secretary of State for India have very wisely decided otherwise.

The young "Competition Wallahs" commence their career as the "assistants" of superior officials. This is their term of what we call "école d'application," the only difference being that they spend it *in loco*, instead of at school. In order to clearly, and briefly indicate, the position which they occupy, they are termed *ineffective officers*. They are *ineffective* in two respects: their names are not entered in the Official List of effective officers, nor do they possess any authority

[1] Cf. The *Report of the Public Service Commission*, 1888, C. 5327, p. 41.

of their own. They are pupils, and assistants. They perfect themselves in the language, the law, the history, and the geography of the province in which they will be called upon to reside. Their position under these high officials, enables them to take in at a glance the whole routine of business and the *modus operandi;* they thus acquire both practical knowledge of the entire system of administration, and an idea of the relative importance of each individual function. It is only on the completion of this stage, that they are appointed to active duty.

A rigorous inquiry into their physical fitness, and their moral character; a competitive examination difficult for any but the most distinguished University-students and, in short, implying a very extensive general education; a year of probation; renewed inquiries; a strict riding examination; then a final examination; and, lastly, a stage in the capacity of "ineffective officer":—this is what Indian Civil Servants have to go through before they are nominated to an independent post. And these are men who are recruited from the *élite* af the nation! What is it that conduces to this resignation or ambition on their part?

We have already foreshadowed it: it is due to the various advantages so wisely linked to service in India, and which none can attain,

without going through the prescribed course. To enumerate these various advantages would occupy too much of our space. Our colonial officials will fully appreciate the tranquillity of mind and moral satisfaction which their colleagues in India derive from a sure, regular and peaceful career, coupled with high emoluments,[1] a highly liberal pension on retirement, and, lastly, the prospect of honourable distinction, and of a seat in the legislative Council.

Such is the fundamental system of recruitment which provides the British with their staff of Indian Civil Servants. If we look for the characteristic feature of this recruitment, as a corollary to the preceding explanations, we find that it is based on a tacit agreement between India and her executive. It is an agreement which involves the principle of *do ut des*. India says to those whom she enlists in her service: "Rise higher than the ordinary level, and I will be liberal."

[1] Comparison of the respective salaries of the Indo Chinese, and the Burmese officials:—

I.	Governor-General.	fcs.	120.000
	Chief Commissioner.	„	160,000
II.	Superior Resident	„	40,009
	Commissioner of a Division . . .	„	66,000
III.	1st class Resident	„	21 to 23,000
	Deputy Commissioner	„	44,000

And observe that in the above tabular statement, we have added official expenses to the salary of the French, but not to that of the British, officials.

And on both sides word is kept, and security furnished as well. Moreover, a formal agreement is entered into, which is termed a covenant. This covenant was originally, and apparently still is, a simple undertaking on the part of the official to fulfil certain obligations, to abstain from all commercial transactions, to refuse acceptance of any presents offered him,[1] and to make provision for the future of his family, etc. But in course of time, and without alteration in its wording, the purport of the covenant has undergone a change. For some time past there has been, in addition to this actual undertaking on the part of the official, a corresponding moral engagement on the part of the Government to reserve to the Covenanted Service—the official designation of this class of officials—the various advantages to which we have just referred.[2]

However, to be strictly correct, we should mention that these explanations which are

[1] It is an understood thing, that the native princes are at liberty to make presents, and in fact they do so; it would be extremely impolite and very impolitic to refuse them; but when received they are at once deposited in a place set apart for this purpose and become the property of Government (Cf. Hübner, op. cit., II, p. 31, and the Marquis of Dufferin's 'Journal', 2 vols. in 18°., Calmann—Levy, 1890.)

[2] See notably the document entitled: *East India Civil Servants*, 29 July, 1890, 327, p. 2. col. 2.

in other respects perfectly accurate, are so in what may be called a theoretical sense. In fact, on the one hand, certain officials sign covenants, without thereby entering into the Covenanted Service: their covenant is then merely a document setting forth the special conditions of their engagement. On the other hand, the members of the Covenanted Civil Service now no longer enjoy the exclusive privileges accorded to them in bygone days. As their cost to the State is heavy, the latter endeavours to reduce their number. This it accomplishes in two ways: in requiring more work from individual members—to this point I shall subsequently revert,— and in intrusting others, non-members of the Covenanted Service, with duties which by the regulations should imperatively be reserved to that Service.

To be sure, the Government of India, while conceding these exclusive privileges to members of the Covenanted Service, has reserved to itself the right of admitting to the Civil Service other officials recruited by different methods. Open competition has evidently failed to secure all the men of merit. Many, whose assistance would be valuable, have been discovered in other professions. These it endeavours to attract to its service, and according to circumstances, and to their ability, binds to it by more or

less stringent obligations. Some are borrowed from other administrations, and are engaged merely temporarily, their special knowledge being utilised for a given period. Others are permanently enrolled, and incorporated in what is termed the "Uncovenanted Civil Service." [1]

The Covenanted Service comprises solely the Indian *Civil Servants*, those same officials with whom we have exclusively dealt in the course of the present study; the Uncovenanted Service, a far more numerous body, comprises officials of all denominations: those of the technical departments, such as engineers, foresters, telegraphists, etc., and also a few of the higher class of Civil Servants. The latter are, however, in an infinitesimal minority. Here are some official figures bearing on this subject. The Civil Service numbers about 1,020 members, of whom about 950, including members on furlough and ineffective officers, are employed in the Covenanted Service, and about 70 in the Uncovenanted Service.

On the other hand, the Uncovenanted Service numbers altogether about 4,800 officials, of whom 1,600 are Europeans or Eu-

[1] Cf. on this subject the following official documents: "Correspondence relating to the age at which candidates"... etc., 1885, C. 4580; "Report of the Public Service Commission", 1888, C. 5327; idem, 1890. C. 5926.

rasians (half-castes), and 2,600 Asiatics. As will be observed, the proportion of Asiatics in the Uncovenanted Service is very large. In the Covenanted Service, on the contrary, it is insignificant: about ten in 950. This is a momentous question, both from an equitable and a political standpoint, and has long occupied the minds of thoughtful men.

These two subsidiary methods of recruitment provide the Government of India with most useful servants. Thus, there are consuls, for instance, who are temporarily drafted to a province of India adjacent to the countries where they previously officiated: such were, in Burma, Messrs. Barber and Warry, who were selected from among the best British Consuls in China. Again there are officers taken from the Staff of the native army, and appropriated for an indefinite term to posts in the Civil Service. Thus, in Burma, Colonel Laughton officiated as Chief Secretary; Col. Fryer as Financial Commissioner; Col. Sladen (whose name we have already mentioned) as political officer at the Court of King Theebaw; and a certain number of officers of minor importance filled various other posts in the Civil Service.

Lastly, the Civil Service is recruited from two other classes of persons: viz., from such as have not hitherto been in Government employ, and from Government officials in

other employ than that of the Civil Service: they are selected by Government on account of their intimate acquaintance with certain countries, and so forth. Thus, in order to meet the initial requirements in Upper Burma, Government engaged the explorer, Mr. Archibald Colquhoun of the Engineers; seven or eight officials of the telegraph, and financial departments, and of the police; besides three non-official persons, one of whom was the Principal of a College, and the other two in the service of the *Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation.*

The system which we have indicated, is one of those which is also made use of in France. In Tongking, for instance, generals, colonels or commanding officers—some of high distinction, notably such as M. de Maussion, M. Servières and M. Pennequin—held the post of 'Resident' conjointly with their military commands; and several officers of all grades have occupied civil posts in which they have rendered signal service. But we have not, I think, utilised to the same extent as the British, the enormous resources which our army afforded us in this respect.

The British were careful to avoid two faults: they did not, as we have done since the close of 1886, require officers entering

civil employ to send in their papers and retire permanently from the army: a course which, though possessing some advantages of minor importance, necessarily entails the disadvantage of reducing so valuable a coadjutor both in quantity and quality.

In this respect, the example of what the British did in Burma is instructive. Mr. Archibald Colquhoun, one of those whom we mentioned above, had served not without distinction in the Engineers; he had, moreover, spent several years in exploring the frontier territory between China and Burma, and had succeeded in gaining considerable adhesion amongst the British public at large to his project of penetrating to Yunnan by way of Upper Burma. On all these accounts he commended himself doubly to the choice of the Government of India. He was, in fact, chosen, and posted to the district of Bhamo, the centre of the region which he had explored. But he was only accorded the rank of a Deputy Commissioner of the fourth class.

This affords yet another proof of the good sense and prudence of the Government of India. It has succeeded admirably in recruiting well-prepared officials for the Covenanted Civil Service, and outsiders for the Uncovenanted Service, in meting out to each class a just and appropriate modicum

of advantage, and in deriving from both of them a maximum of utility. We have yet to consider the value of the officials thus recruited.

CHAPTER VIII

THE VALUE OF THE BRITISH INDIAN OFFICIALS

British Opinion: Sir Richard Temple, Lord Lytton, Lord Dufferin, Mr. Herbert—Foreign Opinion: M. de Hübner—Adverse Opinions: British Officials in Egypt—Average, and probably correct, opinion; the officials in the days of the Company, and those of the Government of India—The men of initiative, and the men of discipline—Officials of the future.

It is no easy matter to form an opinion on this point. I must, however, state my personal opinion, and shall do so with all possible reserve. As I have not travelled in the country and have consequently been unable to even attempt an inquiry on my own account—an undertaking by no means free from danger—the sources of my information must of necessity be external, of which I shall mention two. The work that the officials of India have been able to accomplish;

and secondly, the opinion which clear-sighted and credible witnesses have recorded concerning these officials.

We must not think of giving even the merest abstract of what the British have accomplished in India, besides such an abstract would be altogether superfluous; for the value of their work is no longer open to dispute. Recent research has even effectually destroyed some of the abominable tales current regarding the measures adopted in the earlier days of British rule, and has vindicated the reputation of their earlier Viceroys, even that of Warren Hastings. As to the plans, and the administration of the Government of India during the latter half of the present century, it is generally acknowledged, despite criticisms of details of minor importance, that they reflect credit on civilisation. "The Government of India," wrote John Stuart Mill, a man whose very character refutes any suspicion of partiality, "is one of those Governments whose intentions have been most blameless,[1] and," he adds, "whose administration has been most beneficent".

[1] John Stuart Mill was on this point—a fact that must have caused him some grief—in direct opposition to his father, the author of *The History of India*, whom the recent historical criticism convicts of error, and of bad faith in his diatribes against the policy of the Company.

The attitude of the native peoples, in this respect, is significant. "Peoples", because, contrary to the prevailing supposition in Europe, there is not, and perhaps never will be, such a thing as an Indian nation. India contains a collection of peoples, totally dissimilar in race and religion, who mutually hate each other; and each of these peoples is subdivided into castes of high and low degree, which mutually persecute one another. Prior to the arrival of the British, perpetual war was waged between these various races and religions; perpetual oppression was exercised by one caste over another, and by one individual over another. The natives are well aware of this, and of all that they owe to Great Britain, what they prize most highly is British Justice and peace with British Authority."

"I have been able," says Count de Hübner in his *Voyage à travers l'Empire britannique*, "to compare the populations which are under the direct rule of the Crown with the subjects of the feudatory princes. For instance, crossing over the frontier, one comes into Hyderabad. The sky, the soil, the race are the same; but the difference between the two states is striking, and all in favour of the Presidency (whether of Madras or Bombay) which has just been left behind. . . Were proof needed of how deeply the moral

prestige of the British has taken root among the population, I might quote the fact that, throughout the entire Peninsula, the native, if involved in a civil especially in a criminal suit, is always anxious that it should be tried before a British magistrate." [1]

The above is an instructive commentary on the work accomplished by the British in India: it argues greatly in favour of the workers. As to the workers themselves, I cannot do better than reproduce the testimony of those who have seen them at work. I will begin by quoting British testimony.

One might be tempted to dispute this testimony. But all idea of doing so vanishes when the source from whence it comes is considered, and how unanimous the verdict is.

"Competent observers," writes Sir Richard Temple, [2] who has held very important posts in India, "have come to the conclusion that

[1] By this we do not mean that the British have no enemies amongst the Indians: they have some implacable ones But these enemies, educated for the most part at Anglo-Indian schools, and inspired by ambition as much as by patriotism, are perhaps less desirous of delivering their nation than of supplanting the British. They possess, moreover, but a limited amount of influence, though it is increasing, and do not always succeed in impressing others with the high opinion which they entertain of themselves. (See, on this point, *Young India*, by W. S. Caine, 1891).

[2] *British India, the Type of Modern Colonisation*, French translation, 1 vol., 18°, 1889.

Indian Civil Servants represent in the East an admirable type of the better class of Briton. A high prelate of the church, who knows the West as well as he does the East, assured me that he had never met with a superior class of men."

Sir John Strachey, who in his work has given evidence of independence of character rarely to be met with, says that the Indians, though not enamoured of British rule and administration, unhesitatingly prefer them to those of their compatriots.

One of the later Governors-General, the much lamented Lord Lytton, wrote to me: "As Viceroy, I have for five years been in constant communication with all Branches of the Indian Civil Service, and I have formed the highest opinion of their capabilities, and their integrity. Doubtless in a Service of such magnitude as that of British India, there must inevitably be different degrees of intelligence and capacity, and it is indubitable that the Indian Civil Service, like public Services of all other countries, numbers among its members some who are incompetent. But my impression is that, compared with other Services, it contains exceptionally few such men, and that its average standard is exceptionally high."

Another Viceroy still more qualified, perhaps, to express his opinion on this subject,

inasmuch as he was more recently at the head of affairs, and that if any criticisms—as I shall presently explain—are possible with regard to the Civil Service, they must be made with reference to late years—this other Viceroy, (why should I not name him?) Lord Dufferin, wrote to me as follows: "You ask me to tell you the plain truth regarding the skill, experience and, in more general terms, the moral worth of the officials of our Indian Civil Service. I reply without any hesitation: *There is no Service like it in the world.* For ingenuity, courage, right judgment, disinterested devotion to duty, endurance, openheartedness and, at the same time, loyalty to one another and to their chiefs they are, to my knowledge, superior to any other class of Englishmen. They are absolutely free from any taint of venality or corruption. Naturally, they are not all of equal worth, and so I am merely speaking of them as a whole. And moreover, if the Indian Civil Service were not what I have described it, how could the government of this country go on so smoothly? We have 250 millions of subjects in India, and less than 1,000 British Civilians for the conduct of the entire administration."

Lastly, a high official in the India Office writes to me: "You know what precautions are taken in recruiting the Covenanted Civil

Service[1] . . . As far as I am concerned, I have had twenty years' experience in this Office, to which all complaints or accusations against Civilians are sent in, and I am fully convinced of the rectitude, the capacity and the success—all of a high standard—of this Service. Doubtless there have been times when certain of its members have been guilty of incorrect conduct. But the exceptions prove the rule. I can answer for it that strict and impartial justice has invariably been meted out to incapable or dishonest Civilians, however high their official position, however great their social and political influence may have been.

"I attribute the success which I claim for the Indian Civil Service in modern times, chiefly to the fact that it is the best paid Service in the world. A young man of 22, on entering the Indian Service, receives a commencing salary of £480, and this salary may, at the close of his career, have progressively risen to £10,000. This liberal remuneration tends to diminish the temptation to which a man placed in a position of responsibility and power may, by reason of his being human, find himself exposed.

[1] See the 'Report of the Indian Public Service Commission,' 5296, 1890; cf. 'Correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State for India', 1885, C. 4580.

Moreover, I may add that the Government watches with the greatest care over the behaviour of its servants, even in the most insignificant matters, as it is well aware that the continuance of British power in India depends more on the wisdom and justice of its servants than on anything else."

I might quote the opinions of many other Englishmen; but refrain from doing so, as they differ in no wise from those which I have already given.

But in spite of all I have said above, as the British, in extolling the grandeur of their Indian Government and the excellence of its officials, are not disinterested parties, their enthusiasm may appear suspicious to us: I am about to adduce the testimony of a foreigner, M. de Hübner. I quote him in preference to any other, for this reason. As a man of remarkable intelligence, he has occupied high positions in his native country; as a native of Austria, a country which possesses no colonies, he has been able to observe British India without envy or prejudice; lastly, he has on more than one occasion evinced sympathy for our country, and his remarks on our little Indian colony, for instance, are far from being displeasing to us. Now, M. de Hübner, in the course of the narrative of his travels repeatedly recurs to the sentiments of esteem, and even of

admiration which he entertains for the members of the Indian Civil Service, their abnegation, their talent, their integrity and their thirst for information, etc.

"These men," he says "who have something akin to the hero, the missionary (of civilisation), the diplomatist, the judge, the soldier, and the administrator combined, live beneath a flaming sky. I have seen few whose countenances do not bear traces of fever or dysentery, and yet for all that they are contented."

"I have," he says in another passage, "met everywhere men devoted to their Service, working from morning till night and, in spite of their manifold occupations, finding time for reading and serious study. India is governed bureaucratically; but her bureaucracy differs from ours in more than one respect. In Europe the days of the Government employé succeed one another with uniform similarity. Only great revolutions or European wars are capable of disturbing this placid monotony. Here it is not so. The variety of his duties enlarges and forms the mind of the Anglo-Indian official; the dangers to which he may be exposed from one moment to another strengthen his character. He learns to take a mental survey of vast regions, and to work in his office, while the ground trembles beneath his feet. I believe I do

not exaggerate when I say that there is no bureaucracy in existence which is better informed, more business-like or more imbued with the qualities which make the statesman and—no one will venture to deny it—more honest and straightforward than that which administers the Peninsula on the Ganges."

Lastly, in a final passage he says: "I have in the preceding narrative, given a faithful and conscientious epitome of the information which I was able to obtain from the most direct and most credible sources respecting the various places. I have not concealed any point in the colossal British administration which struck me as weak. I have not passed over unnoticed any one of the complaints made, rightly or wrongly, by respectable persons acquainted with the country. But even if viewed from the standpoint of the pessimist, which is not mine, and if a large share be granted to the inherent infirmities and defects of human nature, it is still undeniable that British India at the present day presents a spectacle which is unique and unrivalled in the history of the world . . . And to what are all these miracles due? They are due to the wisdom and intrepidity of a few leading statesmen, to the bravery and discipline of an army composed of a small number of British, and a large num-

ber of natives,[1] and led by heroes; lastly, and I may say almost chiefly, to the intelligence, the devotion, the courage, the perseverance, the skill, combined with an integrity proof against everything, of the handful of officials and magistrates who govern and administer the whole of India."

This testimony is decisive.

And yet even this evidence, though so extensive, formal and corroborative, is confronted by adverse testimony. Now it is a traveller who has met in India, instead of men of eminence, independence or initiative, veritable European bureaucrats, mere underlings and busy-bodies. Now it is a resident of Cairo who declares that the British officials drafted to Egypt are below the average in intelligence and integrity and serve by contrast to show off the ability and uprightness of the officials of other nationalities.

I attach but little importance to complaints emanating from Egypt, and for the following reason. The officials drafted from India to that country for the most part do not belong to the Covenanted Civil Service, the only body of officials which concerns us here, seeing that it is the only body whose members can attain to the higher posts enabling

[1] The British army numbers 75,000, the native army about 160,000 men.

their occupants to exercise an important influence on the government of a country. Even assuming that they were taken from that class—as was the case with several of them—this would not alter my opinion.

Indeed, the method whereby the officials of the Covenanted Civil Service are recruited, the tests which they have to undergo, and the knowledge required of them, fit them for service in India, but for no other country. Removed from the scene where their knowledge was to have been brought into play, they may fail to do themselves justice, without thereby affording a proof that they would have been professionally incapable in the country in which they were to serve.

But having conceded so much, I must add that the British Indian officials in Egypt do not all answer to the description of the resident of Cairo alluded to. Sir Raymond West, for instance, and Mr. Justice Scott, and Sir Auckland Colvin, the present Lieutenant-Governor of the North-west Provinces, have been highly successful and will bear comparison with officials of any other country in the world. And to these names might be added those of Sir Evelyn Baring, a former Indian Financial Secretary, and of Sir Colin Scott Moncreiff, a Civil Engineer who successfully conducted the Irrigation Works, and whose services the Russian Gov-

ernment is said to have endeavoured to secure. It appears to me that the above considerations and proofs invalidate the indictment.

And for the rest, my answer is this. The two adverse opinions I have quoted do not apply to men of the same category or epoch. As was apparent from the letters which I reproduced above, a Service of such magnitude as that of India numbers among its members men of unequal value. It matters not that in the competitive examination they were almost on a par; nor that they commenced their career by occupying identical posts; they derive different degrees of profit from life and its daily lessons, and this leads ere long to disparity and separation. The average intellects do not rise above the level of executive officers and, but for powerful patronage, stop short at the rank of Chief of a district, Deputy Commissioner: which in their case represents the marshal's *bâton*. Others who are more brilliant or more thorough, attain rapidly enough to the positions of Commissioner of a province, Chief Commissioner, Secretary to Government, Governor, etc. Commensurately with their advancement, the exercise of larger powers, and the contact with men of higher intellect tend to develop their natural faculties and to raise them from distinction to eminence. Now, it

is more especially these eminent men, on whom devolve duties of the highest importance, who associate with, and entertain Viceroys and their ministers, or distinguished travellers, such as M. de Hübner; and we can well understand how, under the seductive influence of their talents, the flattering estimate formed of the best representatives of the Service may have been complacently extended to the whole body of civilians.

And yet other more serious and thorough explanations may, I think, be found for the contradictory evidence to which I have alluded. These explanations are founded on two authenticated facts which are both connected with the recruitment of the officials. The system of recruitment has for some years past been essentially modified; one of the causes of these modifications is merely temporary; it lay within the power of the legislator to abrogate it, and this has, at the time of writing, been actually done; the other cause appears to be of a permanent nature.

The first was as follows: The commission, over which Lord Macaulay presided, had sought to attract to the Indian Civil Service the intellectual pick of the nation, that is to say, according to its opinion, the young men who had gone through the University

career. To attain this object, the commission drew up the examination-papers and fixed the age limit so as to correspond both with the University curriculum, and with the age at which the students leave college after taking their degrees. I need not again refer to the examination-papers. The maximum limit of age was, as I have already stated, fixed at 23, the minimum limit at 18 years, with the proviso that 18 years was an extreme limit, and that a candidate of that age might only be admitted under quite exceptional circumstances.

These regulations were most successful. No sooner were they put into force than it was ascertained that large numbers of University men entered their names for the open competition for the Indian Civil Service. In 1858, out of 40 candidates 90 % were University students. Unfortunately, for reasons which space forbids mentioning, the maximum limit of age was gradually lowered from 23 to 21, and from that to 20 years, and finally, by an Order in Council dated the 24th February, 1877, of Lord Salisbury, who was then Secretary of State for India, to 19 years; the minimum limit being fixed at 17. This decrease in the limit of age led to disastrous results. Students at the University, being bound, if they wished to graduate there, to pursue thire

studies up to the age of 22, found themselves compelled to choose between India and the University, or in other words, as I have previously explained, between an Indian career, and any one of the professions open to civilians in the United Kingdom. Those who chose an Indian career went so far as to discontinue their studies at the University, in order to prepare for the open competition. They placed themselves under some professional expert, who "crammed" them to their hearts' content. As a consequence, the proportion of candidates hailing from the Universities sank to a ridiculously low level, and the remainder no longer offered the security of a sound general education, the need of which Lord Macaulay had so strongly emphasized.

This twofold result, which threatened to reduce to a lamentably low level the intellectual qualifications of Indian Civilians, has for several years past been universally condemned, both in India and in England. Finally, after a lengthy inquiry, the Government yielded to the protests which even the Viceroy of India supported, and, as we have seen, the limits of age for the open competition of 1892 are respectively fixed at 21 and 23 years. This being so, we may hope that the young civilians *in spe* competing in future years will recall their elder

confrères of 1858 and following years.[1]

Such is the first of the causes to which I referred. The British Government has suppressed it. The second, on the contrary, is still existent, and is beyond the reach of Government control.

The Civil Service and, generally speaking, the administration and government of India are no longer recruited as they were thirty years ago. They comprise two classes of officials who, though side by side, are not assimilated, the one still belonging by tradition to the days of the Company's *régime,* and the other—already the great majority—to the period of Crown administration. Between the two types there is a gulf fixed. And this is not owing to a difference in the method of recruitment, to the substitution of recruitment by open competition for that of recruitment by free selection: competitive examinations were already in vogue in the

[1] This appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in December, 1891, and January, 1892. In February and March, 1892, two English Reviews published articles on the same question. One was the *Educational Review*, which, by the licensed pen of Sir William Markby, Professor of Indian Law at Oxford, urged the students of Cambridge and Oxford to adopt an Indian career. The other was the *Oxford University Magazine*, which, in an anonymous article, but evidently penned by an expert in such matters, devoted itself specially to the approaching Open Competition for the Indian Civil Service to be held in August, and set forth the inducements held out to students to take part in it.

days of the Company, and more than one civilian of the present day who can recall the better models of former times, is a "Competition Wallah." The fault, if any, lies in the circumstances and manners of the time.

In the days of the Company's *régime*, rapid communication did not exist either between India and the mother country, or especially,—and the Company suffered for it—between the principal centres in the interior of India. On the other hand, there was no such plethora of regulations providing for so large a number of possibilities, nor that long series of well-established precedents which are decisive, so to speak, in the matter of future eventualities. The result was, that the Government of India and its agents found themselves thrown, much more than at present, upon their own resources, and thus led to decide weighty matters on their own unaided responsibility. The duties of their office were therefore important, and well calculated to entice men of energy and initiative whom, on the other hand, the liberal salaries, whether fixed or contingent, might induce to overlook exile, for such was practically the lot of Indian officials at that time.

Now, of these men endowed with energy and initiative Great Britain has throughout all ages possessed an abundant supply: they are the younger scions of noble or wealthy

families who throughout the course of English history have occupied so prominent a position.[1] Compelled by custom to carve out for themselves a career which their almost justifiable jealousy pictured as transplendent, they willingly entered the service of a Company which had posts of such interest coupled with salaries on so munificent a scale at its disposal. But these cadets whose sires had for generations been used, both by habit and inclination, to command, and to the responsibilities connected with it, brought into their business broadness of view, decision of character, moral energy, and a fund of physical endurance, in short the very qualities which were indispensable during the period of conquest in India. Doubtless there were among them a few of moderate capacity, and even some 'incapables', who managed to slip in by influence, which was then all-powerful. But a few months of trial resulted in their being either got rid of altogether, or relegated to minor posts. The remainder climbed rung by rung to the summit of the hierarchical ladder: generous, lavish, at times somewhat addicted to plunder, irregular enough in their conduct, but full of "go", and expending their store of courage and invention for the Company's benefit.

This *régime* full of grandeur, but equally

[1] Cf. specially Burke's "Colonial Gentry".

full of abuse, under which, in defiance of even the officials, the interests of private individuals frequently took precedence of those of the nation; under which, still more frequently, the future was sacrificed to the present, had already undergone a gradual modification in the first half of the present century, and came to an end in 1858, on the final suppression of the Mutiny. Since the transfer of the government to the Crown, India has assumed more and more the character of an immense bureaucracy. The means of communication have developed to a prodigious extent; order and discipline have been introduced into everything—as a consequence, officialdom and administration have undergone a transformation, and with them the qualities required in the *personnel*.

Doubtless, now as formerly, the qualities of energy and initiative are held in high esteem; but education, precision, and perhaps even docility are considered more important, and are developed to the detriment of character. The fact is that character, will and decision find merely exceptional employment in pacified and organised India, and that only in certain less civilised parts, or during certain periods of less tranquillity, and are liable, under normal conditions, to be more embarrassing than useful to the Chiefs whose task it is to keep the machinery

in motion. Thus the modern civilian of contemporary India appears to be gravitating more and more towards the whims which characterise all bureaucracies. This revolution has not as yet permeated the entire hierarchy: the intermediate and superior posts are still occupied by brilliant representatives of the old school, though modified in accordance with the exigencies of present circumstances; but in course of time they too will disappear, probably without being replaced, and with few exceptions which the Government will endeavour to multiply, the higher posts will be filled, not by the sons of the nobility, the gentry, or the merchant princes, but by those of the clergyman, the schoolmaster, and the shopkeeper.

This fatal evolution is dreaded as a possible blow to British prestige by men who have grown up in the study and—in spite of all—in the admiration of those who may be called the paladins of India. Great Britain, however, can face it without feeling over-anxious. Times are much changed: the heroic period is over; for the future there is, to all appearance, less need for conquering countries or suppressing revolt than for governing by peaceful measures, by justice and foresight a population which for a long time to come will continue in leading-strings; and for the latter task the shopkeeper's or

the clergyman's son, who would have been incapable of the former task,—the learned, methodical, diligent, occasionally economical, mean and even vulgar official—has the decided advantage over the earlier type with his ardour, his improvising genius, his imprudence, and his lavishness.[1]

It would, however, be an unwise move on the part of the Government to deprive itself once and for all of the latter precious element. As long as there is a question of extending its rule, and of forming Administrations, there will be a need—and rightly so—of men of resource and imagination; and it seems that such men were somewhat scarce in the latest Burmese affair. Besides which, in a general way it is scarcely open to doubt that the officials of Burma have proved inferior to those of the rest of India. That is, however, no evidence against the system *per se*. Indeed, it is not long since, that the Covenanted Civil Service supplied Burma with officials recruited directly from its ranks; and, on the other hand, the vices of officialdom to which we shall presently refer, are due to passing and readily determinable causes; the British are already engaged in remedying them.

[1] See "Colonies and Dependencies," by J. T. Cotton, (pp. 28-35, and 75-80). Macmillan, 1883; in which other, and very singular considerations are discussed.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OFFICIALS OF BRITISH BURMA.

Inferiority of the officials of Burma compared with those of India—Various causes of this inferiority: the climate, and the situation of Burma—Marked dislike on the part of the officials to service in Burma—Excessive economy of the Government of India in regard to personnel; its failure to correctly estimate the personnel that would be required for the administration of Upper Burma—Expedients resorted to: favour and injustice shown in recruiting the personnel.

WE must not exaggerate: the Civil Service of Burma, such as it was originally, and such as it is at the present day, is, generally speaking, satisfactory, in some districts, excellent. Many of the Burmese Officials would reflect credit on any Administration; but there are a few, not only in the Civil Service, but also in the Medical, and other branches of the Service, who stand out as deficient in experience, in devotion to duty, and even, I regret to say,

in conscientiousness. The proportion, though small, of men of this stamp is higher than in any other province of India, and this remark is itself sufficient proof that the evil is almost entirely due to local causes.

Burma has indeed to face two disadvantages: one, peculiar to itself alone, is its situation and climate; the other, shared in common with the rest of India, though in its case the result is possibly more potent and more prejudicial, is the Government's present craze for economy.

And first, with regard to the climate. The climate of Burma is poor, and in the opinion (expressed in June, 1891) of one of our Consuls, M. Pilinski of Rangoon, harder to bear than that of any other part of India. The heat is debilitating, the extreme humidity injurious to health, and certain complaints, such as cholera and dysentery, are either endemic or recur periodically. During the campaign, the proportion of deaths through war and sickness was considerable. The Government transports could not provide sufficient accommodation for all the homeward-bound invalids. In 1888-89 the mortality still remained at 5.32 per cent.

On the other hand, Upper Burma is healthier than Lower Burma; the temperature being somewhat cooler, it is more invigorating; and some of the high officials make

arrangements for alternate residence at Rangoon and Mandalay, according to the season of the year. Certain districts, however, considerably further north, are not on that account the more habitable. Bhamo is only endurable seven months out of the twelve. During the expeditions of 1890-1891 some particularly unhealthy spots were met with: especially Fort White on the Chin frontier, the district of Yeu in the Shan States, that of the jade mines, etc. At Fort White at one time 54 per cent of the garrison were in hospital; Indians, Europeans, and Burmese were all equally affected. In the town of Minthu, the garrison, comprising the Staff and three companies of the 20th Madras Infantry, could not muster more than 35 men on parade. A later report states that 44 per cent of the effective force were in hospital.

An attempt was made to establish, on the hills, Sanitaria similar to those in India, at an altitude varying between 6,000 to 7,000 feet. It was thought that suitable spots had been found, first at Enjouk, and at Bernardmyo, near Mogok; and subsequently on an elevated plateau facing the station of Bingway: ere long, however, it was found that these so-called Sanitaria were no less unhealthy than the rest of the country. The unhealthiness of Burma is not, however,

irremediable. The remedy lies in hygienic dwellings, in water-works and drainage, a rational system of sanitation, hospitals and an adequate supply of medicines: it is, in fact, a mere question of time and money.

But climate is not the only drawback of Burma. Other reasons help to render the province unpopular with the Service.

Service in Burma has never been in high repute. The practical means of good administration are wanting. The districts (administrative units) are too extensive; in a country of the size of France they number only forty-one. Their superficial area averages 4,200 square miles; that of the Amherst district is 15,000; and that of the Upper Chindwin district, 19,000 square miles.

Areas so vast should be traversed by numerous lines of communication, and the means of transit should be rapid. But roads are few and far between, even in Lower Burma, and the railways necessarily inadequate.

This state of affairs entails unpleasant consequences. The sparsely scattered population is not in touch with the authorities. The majority of the chief officials, heads of police, magistrates, etc., reside in the chief towns. The rate-payer lives far from the collector, and those amenable to justice, far from the magistrate. Should a native wish to pay a tax or to defend a law-suit

he must, as is often the case in Algeria, undertake a journey of 100 miles, necessitating a three days' absence from his home. The more zealous officials are disconsolate at their impotence; the others are far too easily consoled. And further: it may easily be conceived that service in Burma, the latest addition to the large Indian family, far from the Central Administration and the favours it can dispense; peopled, moreover, by fewer Europeans and offering fewer advantages, is unpopular with the members of the Civil Service. Now, we know that the candidates selected by open competition are entitled, according to their merit, to elect to serve in a particular Presidency; Burma is not a favourite among them, and has, consequently, to be content with those lower down on the list. And yet even the lowest in a list of picked men must be men of marked ability. This fact does not, therefore, sufficiently account for the proved insufficiency of the Anglo-Burmese officials. The following remarks will complete the explanation.

Members of the Civil Service are not recruited for the whole of India. Prior to every open competition, the Civil Service Commissioners, previously ascertaining the number of vacancies, give out that so many candidates will be appointed to Bengal; so

many to the North-West Provinces, Punjab and Oude; to Bombay, Madras, and Burma. After the open competition the *selected candidates* name the Presidency (or Province) of India in which they wish to serve, and in which, as a rule, their promotion will take place, and on entering upon the period of probation they shape their studies accordingly. They acquire a knowledge of the language, the law, and the customs of their future locality; but while this special course of study renders them more qualified for service in that particular province, it renders them less qualified for service in any other. As a necessary consequence, a civilian who may be an excellent official in Madras, would be not unlikely, at any rate at first, to prove but an indifferent one, especially among the lower grades, if transferred to Bombay.

Now; officials are at present recruited separately for Burma. The officials of other Indian provinces cannot readily, at any rate without preparation, be utilised, and Burma has therefore to rely upon her own particular officials. Their number has, however, been estimated somewhat too exactly. Should any unforeseen event occur, the equilibrium is disturbed, and the administrative machinery is with difficulty kept going.

This is what happened in 1885. Burma possessed a Civil staff of sixty-two officials

who sufficed for all requirements, and who, notwithstanding the likes and dislikes of the members of the Civil Service to which I have already alluded, to put it briefly, performed their task creditably. Suddenly and without any preparation,[1] Upper Burma is invaded and annexed, and requires a considerable *personnel*. A certain number of officials are taken from Lower Burma, with the result that the latter province, in its turn, becomes disturbed and requires the presence of all its officials. It then becomes necessary to turn to another quarter, and to appeal either to non-members of the Civil Service who are well-acquainted with the country, or—the number of such persons being limited—to Civilians of other Indian provinces. Now these Civilians, fitted by their special knowledge for special duties, were ill-adapted for service in Burma; hence this source of supply was checked by difficulties.

For once, then, the Government of India found its studied combinations at fault. And

[1] The conquest of Burma was by no means an unexpected event; but, on the one hand, no one could have foretold whether it would take place in six months or in six years; and, on the other hand, no one knew what *régime* would be established: whether a native or a British Government. Whilst matters remained in this state of uncertainty the Government did not venture to increase the quota of officials selected for service in Burma.

it must be stated that the zeal and energy of the *personnel* failed to remedy the inelasticity of the institutions. In contrast to Tongking, where our colonial, and even our home officials, our officers of all arms, our army and naval doctors all competed eagerly for the vacant posts, great difficulty was experienced in obtaining the requisite supply of officials for Burma. The medical service more especially has never had even the indispensable complement. Burma, as we know, was not popular with Indian Civilians, and their devotion did not impel them to go the length of exchanging a life of comfort for one of fatigue and danger. When they were officially appealed to for volunteers for service in the new province, only men of very inferior ability, though of inordinate pretensions, came forward. Of these half a dozen only were selected.

Considerable advantages should have been offered, so as to attract the best qualified among the Indian Civilians to this discredited province. Now, it just happens that for well-known financial reasons the Government of India is economical to a degree, and is eager to obtain a maximum of work from a minimum of *personnel.*[1]

[1] Lower Burma has yielded some surpluses of revenue which I believe were considerable, though I cannot positively assert it, as the official documents are so

Lord Dufferin, in February, 1886, was of the opinion that he could govern Upper Burma with a Staff (exclusive of police) of twenty-four persons; whereas over sixty were required, and even that number was inadequate. This miscalculation entailed certain infringements of Indian administrative customs, and these infringements were so many errors. The best officials who—be it remarked—were almost always the senior ones, being everywhere in request and everywhere necessary, were frequently removed: Wherever increased difficulties were anticipated, thither the ablest officials were transferred. After some months of this sharp practice, the supply was exhausted; several had to retire on account of ill-health, and

confused and contradictory. With these surpluses, the advantages of which I have spoken, might have been offered to the officials, and the complement of *personnel* have been augmented. This was not done: the surpluses of Lower Burma went into the Indian Treasury, and served to partly counter-balance the deficit in the budget of Upper Burma.

The action of the Government of India is, strictly speaking, excusable. The depreciation in the value of the rupee represents an enormous loss. The interest on the National Debt, which is payable abroad in gold, has increased 50 per cent since 1870.

But the same complaints are made in the British Colonial Service: from one end of the Empire to the other, in all the Crown colonies, the officials are overworked. See, on this subject, some very significant articles which appeared in 1889, especially in the *London and China Telegraph: "Wanted more Officials."*

the task of administration was undertaken by less capable hands.

The administration of justice, more especially, was too often entrusted to young men, who were, notwithstanding, unyielding in their decisions. Lastly, as one fault leads to others, the neglect of the regulations, the contemptuous treatment of the senior officials and of their rights naturally led to arbitrariness and favour. Certain important duties were confided to officials who were unqualified either by age or ability, to fulfil them.

It should not, however, be forgotten that these were only exceptional cases, blemishes which were obliterated by the satisfactory *ensemble*. The body of officials in Burma, though inferior to their colleagues in India, yet remained sufficiently strong to develop the resources of the new possession.

PART III.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT—RESOURCES, EQUIPMENT—RESULTS.

CHAPTER X.

THE RESOURCES OF BURMA.

Agriculture—Forests—Mines: metals, petroleum, coal, rubies.

At the outset, the resources of Burma had been very much exaggerated. A rash estimate had been made of the country as a whole, based on the value of exceptional districts, such as the Delta of the Irrawaddy, etc. But when the *plateaux* and the mountains were subsequently explored; when, in the period following the annexation, officers and engineers proceeded to draw up an inventory of the resources of Upper Burma, it became apparent that these optimistic views would have to be somewhat moderated. But, nevertheless, Burma on nearer acquaintance, even apart from the fact of her position between India and China which

rendered her doubly valuable in British estimation, proved to be a very desirable acquisition.

Burma's natural wealth may be divided into three groups: agricultural produce, forests, and mines.

A brief description which, we fear, must prove rather dry, will suffice.

The agriculture of Upper Burma can hardly be compared to that of Lower Burma. The products of the two provinces differ considerably, and render them dependent on each other for their supplies. The chief product of Lower Burma is rice: from it her four millions of inhabitants obtain their food, and any surplus is sold to Upper Burma, and to foreign countries: a million tons to the former and some hundred thousand to the latter.[1] Sometimes it happens that foreign countries are served before the sister province: if the harvest has been a poor one, or if there has been a great demand for export, the sister province suffers from a scarcity of food, if not from actual famine. This has occurred ere now, and will occur again. But the wealthy rice merchants of Rangoon do not trouble themselves about so small a matter.

[1] In 1889 the export of rice to foreign countries, including British India, reached 918,369 tons, representing a value of Rs. 65,550,000.

In addition to rice, export statistics mention certain other articles which are less plentiful, but more valuable. These, though shipped at Rangoon and Maulmain, come for the most part from Upper Burma.

Upper Burma indeed, unlike Lower Burma, produces more especially superfluities. Hers are special products, which will render her wealthy, when time has brought about a suitable distribution of colonists and capital over the two provinces, and a rational selection of the objects of culture. In that the future of the province lies. There will be a repetition in Burma of the experiments which proved so successful in India and Ceylon. Lower Burma will continue to cultivate rice, as at present; and Upper Burma will furnish the luxuries of life: tea, quinine, opium, etc. The result will be—a phenomenon which we shall doubtless also see some day in Tongking—that tracts of land now lying waste will be converted into highly cultivated centres increasing in value with each succeeding year; whilst, with the exception of the immediate vicinity of towns, the lands of the Delta will remain stationary. This future prospect is not so far distant as might be thought.

Pending the development of her agriculture Burma makes the most of those sources of her wealth which can be read-

ily converted, namely, her forests and her mines.

But the forests have also proved deceptive. Doubtless they contain plenty of timber in great variety and of much value. Teakwood is, perhaps, more abundant in Burma than in any other part of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, and Rangoon and Maulmain are certainly the best supplied markets. In lower Burma, before houses were constructed on the European model, most of those with any pretensions to elegance were built of teak; and, after the local wants had been supplied, there still remained a large quantity of timber available for export. In the year 1889-1890 alone, 182,000 tons, valued at 16 millions of rupees, were exported to foreign countries and to other provinces of India; and in 1890-1891 179,000 tons, worth $13\frac{1}{2}$ millions.[1] But teak is not the only exportable kind. Statistics prove that in the same year about 52,000 tons of other kinds of wood were exported either from Rangoon or Maulmain, and both official reports and scientific works mention a large variety.

Nevertheless, since the occupation of the

[1] The total amounts given of the quantity exported, and of the value thereof, are taken from an official document, *Review of the Trade of India*, published in 1890-1891. But the figures given in the reports of the French and Italian Consuls at Rangoon are considerably lower.

British, an official inquiry has proved that the value of these forests had been overestimated. Cultivated in the most improvident manner by races who have never renewed the vacancies caused by their wasteful consumption, they have been found in many places to be totally denuded of timber; so that, instead of unrestrictedly drawing upon the accumulated reserves, it was found necessary here to replant, and there to introduce European methods of culture. The Forest Department have taken stock of the timber in the richest districts, and according to the supply, either prohibited felling altogether, or restricted it to a certain rigidly limited number of trees.

The mines, on the contrary, have given rise to no misconception. All those which were known to exist have been found again, and others have been discovered whose existence was not anticipated. Thus quite recently Mr. Adam, an engineer, discovered some rich beds of tin at Khow Morang, near Ma-lí-won, on the very spot where a few years before a search had proved fruitless. The mineral wealth of Burma is extremely varied, comprising nearly all kinds of metals, several metalloids, salt, amber, jade, etc. These metals, however, at any rate in those districts where they have been hitherto discovered, are not always found in quantities

that would cover the working expenses. This is the case with iron and copper, and gold appears to be scarcely more plentiful.

With silver it is otherwise. Numerous and rich lodes of this metal have been found, especially in the Shan States. The silver is extracted, and as a rule by very clumsy methods,[1] from argentiferous lead yielding from 2 to 8 francs' worth of metal to 100 kilogrammes of ore. The actual yield of metal dating from British rule, has not yet transpired, but the figures which were submitted to Captain Yule at an earlier date testified to considerable productiveness.

Salt is common enough in Upper Burma; but the trade, being a purely domestic one, is of no great importance.

This is not the case with regard to petroleum, coal, and rubies.

Petroleum has always been a product of Burma. It is found in Lower, as well as in Upper Burma: in Lower Burma, in the province of Pegu, at Akyab on the coast of Arakan; and in Upper Burma, at Yenangyaung on the Irrawaddy. In the latter district there are about 540 wells, of which 300 only are productive, distributed over the centres of Yenangyaung, Beme, Twingung, and Yenaungyet. The total yield of oil is

[1] See the Report of M. Hildebrandt on the mines of Bawsaing, a district of Themyelat.

from 15,000 to 20,000 *viss* per diem (1 viss = 3.56 lbs. English weight). The two centres of Yenangyaung and Beme furnish the major portion: Yenangyaung has 375 wells (of which 209 are working) yielding from 12,000 to 15,000 *viss* per diem; and Beme, 151 wells (72 working) producing 3,600 *viss* per diem. Hitherto the petroleum wells have been worked by plant of the most primitive description. But British capital will doubtless bring about an improvement in this respect. A large firm, that of Finlay, Fleming and Co., has recently started in this district. There is no doubt that the capital thus invested will yield a fair return.

Nothing is known, however, respecting the capacity of the petroleum wells of Burma. This subject was recently discussed by two British engineers, one of whom, Mr. Noetling, merely admitted that the entire extent and depth of the wells had, perhaps, not yet been ascertained; whilst the other, Mr. Marvin, maintained that Burma possessed a greater store of petroleum than the Caucasus and the United States put together. The latter optimistic assertion meets with much incredulity. If the Burmese wells were so enormously productive, the supply of oil, even if obtained by the primitive methods hitherto employed, would have increased or, at all events, not have diminished. But, on the contrary, their supply appears to have de-

creased during the last thirty years. Captain Yule whilst inspecting the district of Yenangyaung in 1858, with that minute attention to detail which stamps him as one of the most accurate observers, counted only 200 wells. Of these the most prolific yielded about 400 *viss* per diem. The produce of the others scarcely amounted to 180. The mean total yield was about 3,600 *viss* per diem. And it is noteworthy that this yield was obtained without the encouragement or the facilities accorded to this industry at the present day. Petroleum was sold at a cheap rate: Rs. 1 to 1½ per 100 *viss*. Labour was dear, and an export duty of 10 per cent was levied on the oil. The proprietor of a well used to say that out of a monthly yield of 27,000 *viss*, 9,000 *viss* went to the labourer, 1000 to the king; and 1000 to the landowner of the district. Now that exploration is conducted methodically, export duty abolished, and the price of petroleum considerably higher, the yield is decreasing; and both Upper and Lower Burma, far from obtaining a sufficient supply for their home consumption, were obliged to import, in 1888-1889, 5,400,000 gallons from the United States, and 965,000 from Baku.[1] These statistics can

[1] These figures are, however, only half convincing, and the conclusion to be drawn from them is not decisive. Burmese petroleum is not a very serviceable oil as an

hardly allow us to support Mr. Marvin's assertion.

With regard to the coal mines and their value, there is an equal absence of reliable information. Captain Yule, who must invariably be quoted when summing up Burma's resources, discovered in the neighbourhood of Thingadhan, on the right bank of the Irrawaddy, some fairly rich mines, the coal from which yielded 27 per cent of ash. Since the annexation of Upper Burma, several other coal-fields of some importance have been discovered.[1] The first, 70 miles north of Mandalay, which must surely be that mentioned by Yule, is already leased to a syndicate which has started working it. The second is in the Chindwin valley, between the two rivers Myitha and Yu. Its total extent, of varying richness, is estimated at 175 square miles. The richest section is along the river-bank, and measures fifty-five

illuminant. Even were the production considerably larger, there would still be an advantage in importing petroleum for lighting purposes from abroad, and in reserving the indigenous oil for industrial uses. Besides which, the total import from America in 1888-1889, probably owing to speculation, exceeded to an enormous extent the average of the preceding years. In 1887-1888 the oil imported from that country did not exceed 1,900,000 gallons, and that imported from Baku only amounted to 1,200,000 gallons.

[1] See the Report of Mr. Jones of the *General Survey of India*.

miles; the seams are of little depth, as a rule from 3 to 10 feet. The coal appears to be of excellent quality, containing on the average 50 per cent (49.95) of fixed carbon. An English syndicate has already acquired the lease of six miles. A third mining centre is in the Shan States, near Lasho, in a locality about to be traversed by a line of railway to be referred to later. This centre contains among other seams, one thirty feet deep and over two miles long; but the quality of the coal is indifferent. Lastly, there are other coal-fields at Panlung, at Namra, and in Lower Burma, on the banks of the river Tenasserim, at a point where the latter is still navigable. It should be stated, however, that the coal obtained from these mines has not up till now been used for industrial purposes, and that even the State Railways procure their fuel either from England, or from Bengal.

Of all the mineral sources of wealth which Burma possesses the most famous—I do not say the most valuable—are her ruby mines, containing also sapphires, topazes, and emeralds. These mines are situated in two districts: the less important being in the district of Sagaing, on the Irrawaddy, in a hilly country of limestone formation; the other, by far the more extensive, in the far north, 4000 feet above sea-level, in a dis-

trict measuring 77 square miles, which includes the basins of Mogok, Yebu, Katha, and Kyapin. It is, most probably, the crater of an extinct volcano.

Mogok, the centre of this mining district, must formerly have been a place of considerable importance. Even now a heterogeneous collection of Shans, Manipuris, Chinese, and even Burmese congregate there. The Burmese are in a minority: as far as it rests with them, they are invariably so, wherever there is work to be done.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PEOPLES OF BURMA.

The Burmese; their character; the primitive state of Burmese industry; trade under the monarchical régime—The Chinese; the part they play everywhere in the Far East; their attitude in Burma; the part they may play there.

THE lazy disposition which characterises the Burman, results from his preconceived notion of life. He it was who, before our philosophers, proclaimed man's right to be happy, and his right to rest, before our socialists. The day of "the three eights," claimed by the most advanced of our working men, would scarcely satisfy him. He would not know what to do with eight hours of sleep, not how to endure eight hours of work. There is nothing to which he is so averse as diligence, unless it be regularity. His ideal occupation is one which does not *occupy*, and which is constantly changing. And from the time of awaking until bed-time how varied is his idleness,

and how completely is his time filled up! He requires an interval for talk, an interval for doing nothing and for the thorough enjoyment of his idleness, and yet a further interval for preparation to resume his task. Day by day to renew the same work and traverse the same route, seems to him intolerable, and even foolish. In the earlier days of the occupation Burmese were employed as postmen. They performed their duties for a week, and then disappeared without any warning. Their delight is to huddle themselves up, gently balancing themselves on the tips of their toes, and smoking interminable cheroots. Moreover, the activity of other people does not disturb their inaction. They are rather fond, whilst taking their ease themselves, of making their women-folk work. For all that, they are good fellows, generous, hospitable, vivacious, taking life easily, and even easy to govern; but so idle, so untruthful, so inclined to throw off any burden, and to decline all responsibility that, hitherto, no serious enterprise can be based upon their labour alone.

However, as the Burman must live, he works. In Lower Burma he can still trust to others to procure him the means of earning his livelihood: in the factories or in the harbours even the laziest can earn a modest wage, which suffices for his more than modest

wants. But in Upper Burma he is of necessity thrown upon his own resources. He cultivates his rice field with implements of the most primitive description; he keeps a few goats—which he prefers to sheep,—sometimes even one or two cows, which he rears for their meat, and not for their milk, for he shares the repugnance which is universal in the Far East, to "become the foster brother of the buffalo." Or else he may add domestic employment to his scant husbandry: he weaves garments for his family with silk bought from a Chinese merchant; a kind of short skirt called "putso" for males and "tamelin" for females. In some districts there are even industries of a more complicated nature: Yule, in the course of his explorations, saw paper being manufactured (though of so coarse a texture, that the natives preferred writing on a palm-leaf); marble being hewn, and even chiselled into highly polished statues; and a fine quality of lacquer being prepared, etc.

But this is all either infantile or merely artistic:[1] it is not industry. The North Burman makes for his personal use only what he requires, and for his client only what

[1] According to Yule, the Burmese appear to be at once industrious, skilful and minute. On this point a judgment may be formed from the description given by him of the manufacture of lacquer. Op. cit., p. 197-198.

is ordered; he has not yet soared to the idea of saving, or of manufacturing what is now called a stock.

His knowledge of commerce is equally small. Indeed, how could he have acquired it? The Chinese from all time and before the advent of the British, his kings also, have saved him the trouble. It was a prerogative of the kings of Burma, and moreover one of their most trustworthy sources of revenue, to purchase the produce of the country for the purpose of reselling it to the Chinese and to Europeans; and sometimes even to purchase foreign products for retail to their subjects. This was effected by means of two great trade depôts established, one at Bhamo near the Chinese frontier, and the other at Thayetmyò on the frontier of British Burma. They sold cotton, india-rubber, lead, timber, and rubies. The profits derived in a single year from these transactions were estimated at six millions of francs (£240,000). Of this profit the people naturally received no share. Ground down by the king, whose example was faithfully adhered to by ministers and mandarins, disgusted with a labour which only served to enrich their masters, beguiled, moreover, by their inconceivable indolence into leading a life of inaction and idleness, the Burmese have remained in a state of childhood even down to our day. And so,

not they, but others, have undertaken the responsibility of the various occupations requiring energy, precision, and foresight. No one dreams of employing Burmese to clear the vast uncultivated tracts of Upper Burma; for this purpose natives of Assam and Bengal are engaged, grants of land being conceded to them on favourable terms along the Mandalay line of railway. Banking, money-lending, the higher branches of commerce, naval armaments, agencies—all these are in the hands, not of Burmese, but of Parsees, Persians and, above all, Chinese.

The number of Chinese is very considerable.[1] At Rangoon alone, they number 30,000. The Chinese take precedence of all nations as merchants, and colonists: whether they are merchant princes or humble shopkeepers, daring capitalists or lenders of small sums for a short time at exorbitant interest, large contractors or simple navvies, agriculturists and undaunted pioneers, or, near chief towns, shrewd gardeners and retired growers of early fruit and vegetables,—all, no matter when or where, in villages teeming with population or in districts still uncultivated, are sure to be found flocking to the place just when their co-operation is needed. They come, they contract matrimonial ties, for even

[1] See the excellent report of M. Pilinski, French Consul at Rangoon, *Bulletin consulaire français*, June, 1891.

the married ones, in deference to custom, leave their wives behind in their own country; and they make a fortune whilst their rivals are still planning how they shall make theirs. Unfortunately, they are occasionally, and especially during the earlier period following their arrival, very difficult to manage. As may be surmised, these bold colonists are not by any means models of discretion or discipline. They go about marauding, and thieving, become smugglers and, at a pinch, pirates; and the heads of their "congregations" have not always the power, or even the will, to restrain them.

In a country such as Upper Burma, which has for a long period been devastated by war, there are frequent opportunities for committing crime. Disturbed in their possession of Bhamo, which they long had in their power, contrary to the wish of the kings of Burma, and which with their blue brick houses, and regularly and neatly paved streets they had converted into one of the prettiest towns in the kingdom; masters, moreover, of the territory bordering on China, and sure of finding a safe refuge, and perhaps even assistance, beyond the frontier, the Chinese have, since the advent of the British, on more than one occasion assumed a peculiar attitude.

Certain British officials, inexperienced in

dealing with people of this sort, retaliated with ill-advised severity. But the Chief Commissioners adopted and, as far as they could, maintained a different policy: they pretended not to notice the existence of these evil intentions. Far from fearing the advent of these troublesome customers, they desired and facilitated it. In succession, Sir Charles Bernard in his Jubilee speech, Sir Charles Crosthwaite, and, lastly, Sir A. Mackenzie in a meeting held at Bhamo which the principal Chinese did not deign to attend, gave utterance to the most flattering remarks concerning them, and made them the most enticing promises.

The valley of the Irrawaddy is open to them, whatever misdeeds may mark their first arrival. They will gradually settle down there: some will take up mining, and others, agriculture. Doubtless they will for several years to come be the cause of much annoyance, and of many disturbances. But, by degrees, with improved communications and greater security, the class of immigrants will also improve; the good elements will eliminate the bad. Already officials better acquainted with their customs, such as Mr. Warry, a former British Consul in China, have succeeded by judicious concessions in instilling into them a certain amount of discretion, and discipline. Henceforward the

Chinese may be expected to play a prominent part in Burma. The daughters of Heth, the Burmese *coquettes*, do not disdain the gallantry of these wily fellows with their discreet tongues and open hands. From this felicitous union a new race may spring which will educate the Burmese people.

With the co-operation of people so clever as they, the future welfare of the country is secured. Burma possesses both natural resources, and labour to work them; she only needed equipment, good economic laws, and well-planned public works. These, with one exception to which we are about to refer, the British have not failed to give her.

CHAPTER XII.

ECONOMIC LEGISLATION.

Regulations relating to the disposal of land—Governmental rights—Reasons why the Government has not endeavoured to transfer land to colonists, or to Chinese—Commercial regulations; the relations between the mother country and her colonies—Custom-house and protective dues; home manufacturers versus the colonists and the natives; free-trade and its results.

THE economic laws which the British were enabled to give to Burma were neither complex, nor numerous. Her industry is still in its infancy; the large towns, where in addition to Europeans all those natives who imitate, or who tolerate Western civilisation are congregated, are chiefly supported by trade; whilst the remainder live mainly by agriculture. The part the British had to play, and the duty they had to perform were thus clearly defined: namely, to encourage agriculture and commerce, and with this

object in view, to afford the cultivator easy access to land, and the trader every facility for disposing of his wares.

Nothing is perhaps so important in a new country as good regulations with regard to land-tenure. The conquest has made the conqueror the proprietor of, at any rate, all domains and all unoccupied lands. The choice of a method whereby he will effect the transfer of these lands to colonists is a matter of the highest importance. This the British have well provided for by formulating and applying very wise regulations; their legislation for Australia has produced most fruitful results, and has been imitated by almost all nations.[1] Instead of presenting land gratuitously, or even offering it to all comers, they sell it to the highest bidder. This method, which owes its origin to the economist Wakefield, furnishes them with the wherewithal to meet the expense of public works, a primary necessity with young colonies; and draws colonists who, having paid for their land, know its value and lose no time in bringing it under cultivation, since they look to it to repay them their outlay. The British did not, however, apply

[1] See on this subject an important document entitled: "Report on the modes in which Land is disposed of in the Australian colonies.... and as to what mode would be most beneficial in future, both to the colonies and the mother country. 1836.

this method in Burma. Indeed, they appear to have displayed no anxiety to adopt any method whatever for the transfer of Crown-lands to private individuals who would bring them under cultivation.

And yet this would have proved a matter of no great difficulty. True, the natives, ruined by the war and lacking alike courage and capital, were not the kind of people to settle in an uncultivated region, exposed to incursions, and which would require somewhat lengthy preparation before yielding any return. But what the natives could not do, Europeans might have done, and especially the Chinese, those elder brethren of all Indo-Chinese peoples. With Europeans to provide the capital, Chinese as contractors, and Burmese as labourers, it would have been possible without any further cost than that of police and overseers, to establish centres of cultivation around which the natives borrowed from the Delta would soon have grouped themselves. Considerable advantages might have been derived from the adoption of this plan which was simple enough, and which the moral support of the Government would have sufficed to put into operation: waste lands might have been populated, the evolution of the Delta effected, order secured, production increased, and foundations laid for the future prosperity of Upper Burma.

Instead of this, grants were indeed made to certain officials—at first under nominal, but subsequently, because of the scandal, under very exacting conditions—of a few plots of moderate size, and these were usually, especially at Mandalay, building-plots; in Bhamo, indeed, some auctions were held at which the price realised exceeded Rs. 5 per square yard. But, as a general rule, in the rural districts, and even in the towns, the Government has made no endeavour, and has even refused, to sell lands of which it is the proprietor.

This course had been already adopted in Lower Burma. In Lower Burma the Government does not sell land, but lets it on lease, and that for a term rarely exceeding thirty years. The reason for this procedure appears to be that the British Government being the proprietor of the greater part of the country, wishes to reserve to itself the chance of profiting by any rise in value which may occur. From what has happened in the case of its other colonies, it well knows the enormous value land acquires as soon as agriculture and industry begin to develop, and having exclusively borne the cost of conquering and organising the country, it lays claim to the whole profits of its prosperity. This point of view may be justified, and this calculation may prove correct; but, to attain this end,

the Government should first have paved the way for the improvement of the lands which it withholds. If it retains complete possession, the era of prosperity on which it relies to so greatly raise the value of its property will be slower in coming. And, on the other hand, when this era at length does arrive, and the Government, (at least in the present hypothetical case), has done nothing in preparation for its advent, it will furnish those who oppose the land-tenure with the only apparently reasonable argument which they can advance, namely, that of "unearned increment."

It is highly probable that the British Government has fully realised the two inconveniences attached to the practice they have long since adopted in India,[1] and if it still makes use of the same measure in Burma, it is doubtless actuated by motives other than those mentioned above. It is questionable whether its motives are not rather of a political than an economic nature. Foreseeing—and this seems probable—that the purchasers of land will in most instances be Europeans, or Chinese capitalists, it possibly regards with feelings of no great satisfaction,

[1] A third inconvenience is that the same thing might happen in Burma as happened in Bombay (where the same policy was pursued), viz., that the land might remain on the Government's hands.

and even with a certain amount of misgiving, the advent of colonists who are as a rule difficult to please, in any case inclined to criticise, and at all times prone to ascertain public feeling with regard to their grievances. Now, established in India with exceedingly limited and scarcely adequate forces both civil and military, in the midst of a native population numbering 250 millions swayed by its prestige alone, the government must be in a constant state of anxiety lest this prestige should be compromised. And as the prestige in reality amounts merely to a conviction of its own infallibility which it has succeeded in instilling into the natives, the more criticisms it encounters—whether justified or not is of little moment at the present time—the greater will be the number of possibilities militating against British Supremacy in India.[1]

[1] "A man who arrives in India with £1000 in his pocket and wishes to buy land for agricultural purposes may very easily spend all his money and have nothing to show for it but a heap of official correspondence: "Why does he require land?—What will he do with it?—Is he a respectable person?—Will he carry out the ideas of Government in all that he does?—Will he pay a high rent, whether he is successful or no?—And, finally, the land granted him will be summarily confiscated if he fails to fulfil all the conditions set forth in the contract. This is excellent from a governmental point of view, but under such conditions there will be no colonists." J. W. W. Danson, Rangoon, 26th September, 1889. (Letter to *The Economist.*)

Whatever the motives of the British Government may be, one thing cannot be disputed, that it has done nothing for agriculture.[1]

Neither has it done anything for commerce. As a matter of fact, as regards the latter, any action was unnecessary. For in any country, and not merely in a new country such as Burma, the action most beneficial to commerce is—*inaction*. I am not, of course, referring to the equipment, but to those regulations which are termed tutelary, and which, under the pretext of protecting, and infusing life into commerce, have invariably paralysed it, if indeed they have not actually been its death-blow. The British Government has therefore wisely not attempted to make any regulations, and its inaction, though, injurious to agriculture, has on the contrary been most helpful to commerce; though, in reality commerce is no more beholden to this Government, than is agriculture itself: the interests of the mother country have been exclusively consulted throughout.

We may add that this is a practice common to all mother countries in their

[1] Little importance can really be attached to the small sums of money advanced by Government to agriculturists. Such measures are childish in comparison with so efficacious a procedure as that of disposing of land to the colonists.

dealings with their Colonies. The foundation of a colony is, nowadays, nothing more than a work of far-seeing egoism, which the mother country undertakes exclusively in her own interest, and from which she intends reaping the exclusive benefit at the earliest possible date. But the colonies themselves resemble children: they did not ask to be brought into the world; once born, all they ask for is to be allowed to grow and to prosper; and any circumstance which impedes their growth or retards their prosperity appears hateful to them, all the more so if it is due to the mother country. The latter, who has founded the colony with a view to her own advantage, looks upon it as bound to be always giving, and never requiring anything. From these opposite views, indeed but natural, a perpetual conflict, and one which is more or less acute, ensues, dating from the day following the foundation, and scarcely at an end when the colony is emancipated.

Now, the arena on which these conflicting interests first battle against each other, is the arena of commerce. The mother country, tired of always paying for her colony, loses no time in requiring the latter to share these expenses, and, to enable it to do so, to provide itself with a regular source of revenue. This source of revenue the colony

will obviously obtain by means of taxes; and the first tax which suggests itself is a custom-duty on the chief articles of consumption and of traffic in the colony. The importance and value of these articles is assessed, with due regard to different circumstances and countries, either on arrival, on departure, or on their circulation in the interior. This is a practice which is so convenient and so productive that it has been resorted to by all nations in all ages. Even at the present day the least civilised peoples, the last of the petty kings on the coast of Africa, when they wish to furnish their creditors with a certain amount of security, can devise no more efficacious a plan than that of allowing them to collect the customs, and to appropriate their proceeds.

Unfortunately, this procedure, though so simple in itself, constitutes a tax on commerce—a tax which must, moreover, be borne by the colony and its inhabitants. The conqueror came to the natives brimful of enticing promises; extolling the advantages of civilisation, and above all others, the abundance and cheapness of everything. He even attracted colonists by dazzling them with the facilities which a new country free from all the impediments and all the burdens which the machinery of old-world civi-

lisation entails, offered to their undertakings; and lo! he imposes on natives and colonists alike,a burden which increases the cost of living for the consumer, and restricts the profits of the trader. In order as far as possible to appease their apparently legitimate discontent—for the mother country can adduce good arguments—this tax must at all events be made light and easy, must be assessed at a moderate rate, and be levied only on a limited number of commodities. This the British well understood. In Burma only six commodities were taxed of those for circulation in the interior, valuable woods, teak, etc.; of exports, rice; of imports, spirits, salt, arms and ammunition, and, by a recent decision, petroleum.

Soon, however, there arises another source of contention between mother country and colony. Colonies constitute investments which are certainly excellent, but which yield no return for long years to come. The generation which founds them finds but scanty consolation for the expense which it incurs in the thought of the profits that will accrue to future generations. It wishes to enjoy these profits itself, and claims to reap some immediate advantage in return for the pains which it has taken, and the sacrifices which it has made. What compensation can it hope for? Additional honour to its

flag? Further prestige to its name? Yes, indeed; but this does not suffice; something more substantial, some material benefit is looked for. And it says to its Government: "How will you guarantee me this benefit?"

Now, when this question has to be faced in all ages and in all countries a certain class of citizens is ready to give an immediate reply: I mean the manufacturing class. The manufacturers' argument is this: Colonies are founded for the sole benefit of the mother country. Any returns they may yield must accrue to the inhabitants of the mother country. Now, the latter cannot expect the Government to distribute the profits among them at so much per head of population. This would be neither easy as a means of distribution, nor efficacious as a means of enrichment. But it may be admitted that amongst the millions of inhabitants of the mother country, there will be some who may be chosen to be direct recipients of the profits of the colonisation, with the understanding that they will subsequently enable their fellow-citizens to share them by a free circulation of the goods, and by the perfected mechanism of trade. And those who seem to be clearly indicated as fit persons to fill this office of intermediary, are the manufacturers of the mother

country. They are the most prominent among those who have urged and even encouraged the foundation of colonies; they have generally borne a larger share of the expenses incident to their foundation than the other rate-payers: as a consequence they are entitled to rank among the first who shall profit by the colonial enterprise; and to ensure their doing so is easy enough: all that is necessary is to levy a custom-duty on goods imported into the colony, not a fiscal, but a differential and protective due, and to grant to home products other and more favourable terms than those afforded to foreign products: the market of the colony and the profits derived therefrom will thus be reserved to them and, through the medium of the manufacturers, the mother country will be sure of reaping the advantages which it is her endeavour to secure.

This apparently rational theory is one which is held in common by the manufacturers of almost all countries, especially by French manufacturers; to it we owe the institution of our general colonial tariff, even in Tong-king which, coveted by our statesmen as offering the shortest route to Western China for our European commerce, has by a solemn and strikingly unanimous vote of our Parliament been, from the very first, almost entirely

closed to foreign merchandise, whatever its destination, and is even now, on the timid initiative of the local authorities which the parties interested have all but ignored, only open to passing vessels with goods for other ports.

In opposition to this theory which is so favourable to manufacturers and, as experience has proved, so prejudicial to the nation at large—for the home manufacturers never succeed in fully supplying the market from which they have driven their foreign rivals, whilst the colonial merchants are restricted to a dull and unprofitable trade by the sale of mere national products—another may be urged which, starting from the same premises, ends in a totally different conclusion. Like the former, it recognises that the time has gone by when colonies were founded with a special view to the propagation of religion or of civilisation; like it, it proclaims that colonies are founded for the benefit of the inhabitants of the mother country, and that, as the latter cannot individually receive their quota of profit, it is absolutely necessary to find a fraction of them who shall be the recipients of these profits, and form a channel whereby they may gradually flow into all parts of the mother country. But the mother country does not fix upon the manufacturers, that privileged and useful class,

as this fraction. She does not designate any special class for this office; her choice falls in anticipation on the class which shall establish a prior right thereto, and make the best use of the same, Now, this class is that of the men who have left their country, their families, the society in which they moved, all the comforts of civilisation, and have gone out to the colony, thus exposing their lives and their fortunes to innumerable risks; it is the class of men who by their presence on the spot are alone in a position to influence the market of the colony: it is, in fact, the colonists themselves.

Now, the interests of the colonists are diametrically opposed to those of the manufacturers: their cry is: away with protective dues; even, if possible, away with fiscal tariffs; away with differential dues; away with obstacles of any sort. Throw all gates wide open to all products. And the results of this system may be thus summarised. For the native an easy life and plentiful means of subsistence; for the colonial market activity and wealth; for the foreign markets, for the countries on the line of communication, rapid and cheap access; for the colonist a fortune made by modest profits realised on multifarious and important transactions; for the Treasury an increased revenue—relieving the mother country; for the colony

the good repute which wealth confers; and, lastly, for the mother country the wide-spread conviction amongst the nations that henceforth there will be no cause for regret should she take possession of any portion of the globe still unappropriated. This is the theory which for a century past has been adopted and applied by Great Britain, and which in a great measure accounts for the astounding prosperity of her Colonial Empire. This is the one, which prevails in India, and in Burma, and which has made Rangoon, the depôt of Burmese trade, one of the finest and wealthiest cities of the Far East.

For this, however, Burma, as I have stated, was not indebted to Great Britain. Indeed, this policy which appears to us here as a result of the wisdom and the generosity of the mother country, was, under the circumstances of its origin, but the result of egotism, and envy.

Indeed, an incident occurred, some twenty years since, which as forming a curious episode in the history of commerce deserves to be generally known. On this occasion it was the home manufacturers who were jealous of their colonial brethren, and demanded the abolition of the tariffs for which the colony had voted. This is a reversal of the usual order of things, with which France is as yet unacquainted, but which she will ex-

perience later, and which may completely upset her system of colonial tariffs.

India, as I have previously pointed out, has for a long time past had a fiscal, and even a protective tariff. This tariff, which at the outset was very severe, has been gradually lessened, the number of commodities on which it was levied has been reduced, and the rate of assessment lowered. Nevertheless, up to 1879 it was still levied on imports of primary importance, and especially on what are termed cotton goods. Under the sheltering protection of this tariff a native cotton manufacture had developed so greatly, as to cause umbrage to the Lancashire cotton-spinners. Since 1876, owing to protests, to which the approaching elections lent great weight, the British Government urged the Government of India to abolish the duty on cotton goods.

The despatch which Lord Salisbury, the then Secretary of State for India, indited on this occasion is a very curious one. In it Lord Salisbury showed with great accuracy the motives militating in favour of the abolition of this duty, and with equal sagacity the excellent results which would accrue to India from its abolition. That his arguments were inspired solely by a sincere regard for India's interests concerns us little; one point only should be borne in

mind: which is, that political economy was amply justified on this occasion, and that what was perhaps devised solely in the interests of Lancashire, proved through the stress of circumstances, of the greatest benefit to India.

"I maintain," said Lord Salisbury substantially, "that there is no conflict between the interests of India and those of England. The abolition of this duty would undoubtedly afford great relief to an important British industry; but, at the same time, it would constitute a measure of still greater consequence to the interests of India. This duty has the effect of restricting the importation of British products; but, on the other hand, it opens out a sad prospect for an Indian industry which it is of the highest importance to establish on a secure and solid basis. With such a basis everything points to the probability of its rapid development; but it must not be allowed to grow under conditions or influences which past experience teaches us must inevitably prove unfavourable to its development and to its good constitution. Whether the question be considered in so far as it affects the consumer, the producer, or the Treasury, I hold that the interests of India imperatively demand the opportune abolition of a tax which is erroneous in prin-

ciple, injurious in practice, and ruinous in its effects."[1]

In consequence of these urgent solicitations the Government of India took the matter into consideration, and in 1879 Lord Lytton, who was then Viceroy, acting on the report of Sir John Strachey, and contrary to the advice of his Council, abolished the duty on cotton goods, in the first instance on certain qualities only, and in 1881 on all the remaining descriptions. From that time forward trade has enjoyed perfect freedom; nowhere, not even in England, has trade been so free from restrictions. And, a few years later, all Lord Salisbury's predictions came true. Cotton imports rose from £19,000,000 in 1887 to 31½ millions in 1888-1889; the native cotton manufacture gave employment in 1889 to 2,625,000 spindles, instead of 1,298,000 as in 1877; and its exports to countries in the Far East, which in 1874 scarcely reached £1,000,000, exceeded £6,290,000 in 1888-1889. Thus the egotism of a few eventually resulted in an advantage to all.

Nevertheless, it would be puerile to attribute the prosperous condition of the Indian community under the British protectorate to free-trade alone; many other causes have

[1] See Sir John Strachey's Work, *India* (p. 102), to which I have already alluded.

contributed to it and among them the development of means of communication, and the impulse given to public works. Lord Dufferin bore this in mind. The annexation of Burma dated from December, 1885; in February, 1886, Lord Dufferin embarked for Rangoon, and at once proceeded to plan, and to carry out a scheme of public works.

CHAPTER XIII.

PUBLIC WORKS.

The Public Works Budget of Burma—Roads—Rivers—Roads versus Railways—Railways—Various lines constructed or sanctioned—The line from Toungoo to Mandalay: political and financial results..

Of all the means which a Government can bring to bear to develop the resources of a country, there are few more efficacious than public works. This fact holds good in all countries, and especially in a conquered country during the agitated period of time succeeding a war. The first problems to be faced by the conqueror are, in fact, how to discourage his late foes by proving to them, in deed and no longer in word, that his occupation is intended to be permanent; how to conciliate the labouring class by providing it with work, if poor, or if well-off, with improved means of acquiring wealth; and, lastly, how to requite its soldiers and civil officers

by insuring them greater security and comfort. These problems may partly be solved by means of well-planned public works.

The successive rulers of Burma since 1885 have not deceived themselves on this point. Lord Dufferin, the first in order of date, used to say that he anticipated great things from the public works. Nevertheless, the scanty means at his disposal largely curtailed his plans. None but those works which were absolutely necessary were at first to be undertaken: roads to connect posts already occupied, and to form a means of reaching new ones; some few barracks, and hospitals for the troops who were so enervated by the climate and the fatigue of continual watching. At a later period this programme was enlarged; law-courts, and official residencies to keep up appearances in the eyes of the natives, were erected; then followed the repair and even extension of embankments, and irrigating canals;[1] and, lastly, came railways. His successors pursued the same policy. In 1886 the Public Works Budget for Upper Burma amounted to about £80,000; in 1887-1888, as also in

[1] For a country such as Burma, irrigation is of the utmost utility. The British-Indian Government has not hitherto devoted to this purpose as much capital as it requires. In 1892 the sum credited to this account still does not exceed Rs. 500,000.

1888-1889, it had risen to nearly £480,000; and, lastly, that for 1892 is estimated at 13 millions of rupees, of which 10 millions are for railways alone.

The various items in the 1889 budget of nearly £480,000, the latest budget of which particulars are at hand, were as follows: £160,000 for barracks, hospitals, etc.; £124,000 for State buildings, such as law-courts, prisons, post and telegraph offices, etc.; £48,000 for sundry disbursements; and lastly, £140,000 for communications.[1] I shall confine my observations to this last item.

The sum of £140,000 to be applied exclusively to lines of communication is a by no means despicable provision. Our Governors of Tongking can testify to this, for when they have paid their engineers and superintendents, they have nothing left. And yet this sum does not represent the whole expenditure under this heading. In the £140,000 neither embankments (which in these countries are used as roads) nor railways are included. Low as the state of the exchequer might be, it was not thought

[1] These figures do not, however, correspond with those given by the official document *East India Accounts and Estimates*, 1891-1892, C. 6454, 1891. p. 13. I shall quote here merely the following figures referring to the year 1888-1889: Irrigation, Rs. 246,000; Public Works (Military), Rs. 1,604,000; Public Works (Civil), Rs. 2,908,000; Total Rs. 4,756,000.

desirable to postpone any longer the provision of a superior equipment. From a strategical, as well as an economic standpoint great importance was attached to these works; as much was expected of a highway in good order, and a well-constructed railroad as of a battalion, or even a regiment of soldiers, and the British even went the length of curtailing their military budget in order that they might increase their expenditure on bridges and roads.

The first thing that had to be thought of, was roads. In Lower Burma the mistake had been made of neglecting this item: each succeeding Chief Commissioner had committed the same error. Living at Rangoon, on the sea, at the extremity of a Delta dissected by so great a number of rivers and canals, most of them did not trouble themselves much about the rest of the country. This proved a matter for regret on more than one occasion:[1] but their experience was not forgotten in dealing with Upper Burma.

A country intersected by water-ways and bristling with mountains has naturally very few roads: on the level tracts streams and

[1] "Lower Burma has been for several years in our possession. But preceding governments have displayed so little foresight that there are as few practicable roads in Lower, as in Upper Burma." (*The Times*, 29th September, 1888.)

rivers suffice for all purposes, and in the mountainous regions only foot-paths are met with. Now, it was to the mountains that the last of the belligerents fled for refuge. Numerous stations had been established there: in order to connect these with each other and with the principal centres, it was found necessary to widen the foot-paths, and to cut new roads. And this work was proceeded with without delay and, above all, without interruption. Simultaneous surveys were made of international routes, if we may so call them, leading from the Irrawaddy to the Brahmaputra, from Assam to Burma; of national highways connecting the valleys with one another, from the Chindwin to the Irrawaddy, from Chittagong to Mandalay; and lastly of roads to form connecting links between the various districts. However, very properly, what was most urgent was dealt with first: as a beginning, connection was established between the various postal and administrative districts. At the beginning of 1887 there were 300 miles of good main-roads, some macadamised; and numerous branch-roads. Since then, these works have year by year been largely added to, and there is now hardly a single district which has not at least one road.

Naturally, whilst these roads were in course of construction, other means of transport,

and especially the most important of all, namely streams and rivers, were not neglected. I have said that Burma is intersected by numerous water-ways: the Irrawaddy, the Salwen, the Sittang, the Chindwin, the Mu, and several others, forming a convenient and economical means of communication extending over considerable area. Unfortunately, these rivers, like most of the rivers of Indo-China, are, to use a very appropriate epithet, incomplete; they offer two great obstacles to navigation: in the dry season their waters are frequently too shallow for vessels of even the lightest draught; in the rainy season thy are transformed into rushing torrents. They then drag, so to speak, their bed along with them: sand and slime are carried down to the sea, and form a deposit at the mouth of the river, thereby creating formidable bars which gradually gain on the sea and extend the mainland; the residue, consisting of stones, shingle and rocks, arrested at intervals in their downward course by natural obstacles, create very dangerous rapids. In addition to this, the waters, enormously swollen by the rains, overflow their banks, and inundate the surrounding country.

As a preventative against inundations, embankments are constructed. Orientals are past-masters in this work: they construct, and keep up these artificial embankments

with means, the simplicity and efficacy of which cannot but rouse the envy of our ablest engineers. These embankments in some places reach a prodigious size. Yet the rivers of Indo-China are by nature well embanked; their natural banks rise above the water-level to a height of from thirty to sixty-five feet (and sometimes more): at Thabetyin in Burma they even reach a height of 120 feet. On heights to which it might be thought the water could never rise, it is surprising to see the native, still distrustful of the river's vagaries, perch his hut, as a bird builds its nest, on the top of frail bamboos. The native is, however, quite right. When the rainy season comes, the river rises and, were it not for these embankments, would overflow into the valley beneath. At a distance of 250 miles from the sea the Irrawaddy in the rainy season rises to over 45 feet above its dry-season level, and its embankments, which extend for nearly 300 miles, in some places exceed sixteen feet in height. It may well be imagined what an amount of attention and money the maintenance of such a work entails. At all events, this expenditure insures almost absolute security to the life and property of the inhabitants.

Less happy results have been attained in combating the shoals and the rapids. The

sure but costly methods employed in Europe to regulate the flow of rivers, and to insure the maintenance of a uniform depth at all seasons of the year, could not be adopted with these gigantic streams, and in these still impoverished countries. The rapids may be destroyed with dynamite. This means has not apparently been hitherto employed in Burma; but at Tonking, the French have attained the best results from its use on streams which in character and size resemble the Irrawaddy above Bhamo.

To combat the shoals, there is but one resource, and that a very inadequate one, viz.—to build boats of light draught. It is, however, a very unpractical resource in places where there is much navigation. The Irrawaddy which is by far the most important river, and which absorbs almost the entire traffic of the interior of Burma, is uncertain and difficult to navigate. For several months in the year its waters lower so considerably as not even to afford a depth sufficient for river-steamers, and the continually shifting sand-banks baffle even the most experienced pilots. Captain Yule, in 1853, and quite recently, Lady Dufferin, have both recounted their adventures on board vessels which had run aground on sand-banks. Besides sand-banks, the rocks are a great source of danger; the latter have already been the cause of

several wrecks: witness the *Thureah* of the Flotilla Company, which Company was also destined, shortly after to lose the *Patheen* on the Chindwin.

Under such conditions, traffic is suspended for several weeks, and above Bhamo for several months, in the course of each year. Captain Yule states further that it took him 83 days to cover the short distance from Bhamo to Tsa-Choe-Sing. Moreover, after passing Bhamo, the river is only navigable for a further distance of from 120 to 150 miles; at Hokat there is a rapid which has hitherto proved impassable, whilst the precipitous banks, crowned by mountains 6,000 feet high, render trans-shipment almost prohibitive.

Mortal man can do little, directly, to counteract difficulties such as these. The canalisation of a river which at a distance of 800 miles from the sea is almost as broad as at its mouth, is apparently a chimerical project. The expense of cutting a channel would be enormous, and even when cut would, doubtless, with so variable a bed and sandbanks so continually shifting, be impossible to keep clear. The other rivers are no better constituted. To derive any advantage from them, the only available course is to put down buoys which would have to be subjected to constant revision, to train efficient

pilots, and to construct boats specially adapted for the navigation. In this respect the potent Irrawaddy Flotilla Company has done all that was possible to be done. Its fleet, one of the largest—if not the very largest—of river-fleets, supplies the entire service on the Irrawaddy from Rangoon to Bhamo and beyond, and according as the season admits of it, also on the rivers Chindwin, Myitngè, etc.

In spite of this, the navigation of these rivers continues intermittent and irregular. A Government in the critical position which the Government of Burma then occupied, could not, without imprudence, rest satisfied with communications of so precarious a nature; it required more regular and more rapid means of communication: of such there were apparently none other but railways.

There was, however, some hesitation in choosing between railways and cart-roads. Not indeed in Burma, where no one thought of comparing means of transport so dissimilar, but in London, at the India Office. Lord Kimberley, when he was asked to sanction the construction of the line from Toungoo to Mandalay, replied by inquiring whether "at least in the present state of the Burmese finances, and until they showed some improvement, the attention of the Government would not be more advantageously directed

to good roads available for use in all seasons, which would form a connecting link between the principal centres?" However, the local Government easily overcame that objection: Upper Burma now has already 314, and Lower Burma 336 miles of railways.[1]

But the history of the construction of these railways is so instructive that we cannot avoid entering into further details.

In Lower Burma the question of railroads had apparently for a long period attracted as little attention as that of highways. The British had been masters of part of the country since 1824, of the entire country since 1852, and it was not until 1877 (2nd May) that the line of railway from Rangoon to Prome was opened. Then an interval of eight years elapsed before the opening of the line from Rangoon to Toungoo.

It is a noteworthy fact that the British felt their way in India for a century and a half before they succeeded in evolving a rational system. In particular, they do not appear to have appreciated until a very late

[1] These 650 miles are apportioned as follows: in Lower Burma: Rangoon to Prome (1877), 161 miles; Rangoon to Toungoo (1885), 166 miles; Suburban lines, 9 miles; in Upper Burma: Toungoo to Mandalay, the second section of the line from Rangoon to Mandalay (1887-1889), 220 miles; Sagaing to Shwebo and Wuntho, the two first sections of the Mu Valley line (1891), 94 miles. To the above should be added the lines sanctioned, or already in course of construction.

period the economic and political importance of public works, of means of communication, etc. In 1836-1837 the Indian Public Works Budget did not exceed £81,000. In 1850 it had already been increased to £400,000, not to mention an extraordinary budget for barracks, hospitals, etc.; in 1886-1887 their eyes were opened, and the Public Works Budget figured at £15,617,000. Moreover, when the idea was entertained of pacifying and developing the resources of Upper Burma, it had its origin in other motives than those which had so long prevailed in the rest of India, and particularly in Lower Burma.

"Next to a strong police-force, and an efficient civil administration, nothing is more important, as a means of pacification, than the opening up of improved communications, and among others, of the railways now about to be constructed as far as Mandalay." It was in such terms that the *Edinburgh Review* wrote (April, 1887), though its remarks were merely a recapitulation of the opinion entertained by the highest authorities. From the very first, Lord Dufferin, Sir Frederick (now Lord) Roberts, Sir George White, Sir Charles Bernard, Colonel Fryer, were all of the opinion that, notwithstanding Burma's meagre budget, the construction of railroads must be proceeded with at once. In concurrence with Sir Herbert McPherson, who had

just met his death in the country he knew so well, they opined that "every line of railway opened in Burma would be of more value than an army-corps," and would be at once a source of wealth, of great strategical worth, and an agent of pacification.

"The opening of a railroad to Mandalay—an extension to Upper Burma of the line from Rangoon to Toungoo—would," to quote a document dating from the middle of 1886, "have important results both in Burma, and the Shan States. In Upper Burma a great number of people refuse to believe that the British have really conquered their country and are in actual occupation of Mandalay; a great number of others will not admit that we intend to remain in the country, and to govern it in the name of the Queen-Empress. The opening of a State Railway would have a decisive effect over these doubts and surmises.

"On the other hand the work, and the wages which it would provide, would exercise a great influence on the pacification of the country, and would reconcile the population to British rule. In the region through which this line is to pass, the villages have been plundered by dacoits and rebels; and the peasants have been unsettled by the anarchy which prevailed last year. When we shall have opened the line of railway for a con-

siderable distance in this region, have guarded and efficiently protected it, the immediate effect upon the population will be very great: work will have been provided for them during the slack season, and thereby they will have been enabled to earn money;[1] lastly, a practical proof will have been afforded them of the interest which the British Government takes in their country.

"Naturally, the impression created by the construction of the railway will be but temporary, but it will be precisely at a time when there is most need of it; for our present object is, to induce the various races to submit, to supply them with an outlet for their energy and with the means of providing sustenance for their families by devoting themselves to peaceable occupations. Moreover, apart from this effect, the railway will produce other and more lasting effects upon the population: it will supply them with the means of travelling hither and thither; of forming an idea of the power of the British, of their system of administration,

[1] In the year 1891 there occurred one of those periodically recurring famines which are the scourge of Upper Burma. Two-thirds of the population were rendered destitute. The Government doled out relief in kind, decided, to meet the urgencies of the case, on the construction of a line from Myingan to Meiktila, the repair of the breaches in certain embankments, and in short, provided work for more than forty thousand people.

of their anxiety for the welfare of the people; and thus induce them, at length, to consent to become the subjects of Her Britannic Majesty.

"The objection has been raised that a railway is a very costly affair; that neither India nor Burma has a rupee to spare for expenses which can possibly be deferred; that in most countries roads precede railways, and that there are no roads in Upper Burma. The suggestion has been made that it would perhaps be preferable to expend the meagre resources available on a system of branch roads leading to the principal trade centres, and to a central high-road which might subsequently be converted into a railway. Of course the Government ought not in the present state of its exchequer to launch out into works which may be deferred, or altogether avoided. But, in my opinion, it would take thirty years to construct the net-work of roads in question, and no central high-road under whatever circumstances it may be built, can afford the province the commercial, political, strategical and administrative advantages which the proposed railway will afford. Nay, more; I believe I am justified in entertaining the hope that ten years hence this railway, instead of being a burden, will prove a direct source of revenue, which a system of roads could never be.

"It is true that the cost of constructing a railway would be from six to seven times as much as that of a central highway of equal length, and from three to four times as much as a system of cross-roads converging towards a central roadway; but the capital expended on the construction of a railway, would, within a short space of time, yield returns in excess of the interest thereon; whilst at the end of the same period the mere up-keep of a system of roads would represent a total equal to half as much again as the initial cost of their construction. The new railway would convey additional traffic to the section from Toungoo to Rangoon, which alone would constitute a considerable source of income, and this again must be added to the number of indirect advantages which would accrue from this plan. Thus, not only would this railway be self-supporting, but it would yield surplus receipts with which branch lines could be opened subsequently as feeders; and further, it would constitute in the districts which it traverses, a means of pacification and enrichment incomparably superior to that afforded by the most perfect system of roads imaginable."[1]

The preceding passages are extracts from

[1] Burmah, 1887, C. 4962.

a memorandum of Sir Charles Bernard, dated 10th June, 1886, six months after the British occupation of Burma. This memorandum was addressed to the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin. The Viceroy endorsed the conclusions, and on the 6th August telegraphed to London recommending them to the consideration of the Secretary of State for India in Council; on the 20th September he urged their adoption in an explanatory despatch; on the following 27th October he received a telegram to this effect: "Received your despatch of 20th September last, concerning railway. The construction of the Mandalay Railway is sanctioned." A year had not elapsed since the British entered Upper Burma. Who could fail to admire and to envy this promptitude in coming to a decision!

Moreover, pending the arrival of this message, a preliminary survey of the trace and levels had been made, and on its receipt, it only remained to commence operations. The works progressed rapidly. The first section from Toungoo to Pyinmana was opened for traffic in July, 1888, and the whole line on the 1st March, 1889. The formal opening of the line was conducted with great ceremony in the presence of Sir Charles Elliott, Minister of Public Works. The construction of a line 220 miles long, in the interior of a depopulated country, where labour was

scarce,[1] traversing mountains from 400 to 500 feet high, and crossing rivers from 300 to 500 feet wide had occupied no more than two years and a half and had cost only Rs. 92,000 per mile.

Moreover, the line at once fulfilled the expections which had been formed of it. It had taught the people wisdom, and acts of piracy and crimes of all sorts became less frequent.

Objections have been raised to the management of the line.[2] It has been asserted that the Government was entering into an unwise competition with the river-traffic, by reducing its rates wherever trade was offered a choice between the transport by rail or by water. And no one can approve of such tactics, though the Executive may themselves plead in excuse the necessity of recouping its outlay.

The actual line has likewise been criticised. It has been said that it was folly to construct a first line of railway parallel with the finest river of Burma, and through a district better supplied than any other with means of transport by water. This criticism is unfounded.

[1] On the eastern section of the line, the scarcity of labourers was still further aggravated by a positive aversion to work, and by a display of hostility towards those in charge of the works. Even beggars refused to let themselves be enrolled.

[2] See a letter to *The Times* of 28th October, 1889.

The line from Toungoo to Mandalay formed the natural complement of that from Rangoon to Toungoo; besides, it was shortly—as was then supposed—to be continued to Bhamo and was, on the other hand to serve as "a base for future lines connecting the Shan States." Other valleys, those of the rivers Mu and Chindwin, important tributaries of the Irrawaddy, and like it only capable of irregular navigation during the dry season; those too of Hokong and Mogaung beyond Bhamo, impatiently awaited their lines of railway. Lastly, further lines were projected, of commercial or political interest: such as the lines which were to connect Mandalay with the Salwen, Burma with Assam (with a station at Makum), and so on to the Brahmaputra (with a station at Sudiya).

The results attained could not but hasten the execution of the other projects then under consideration, which were all of great magnitude and importance.

CHAPTER XIV.

PENETRATION INTO CHINA.

China and the European Powers—Evolution of European policy within the last thirty years—Occupation of the countries bordering on China—Tongking and Burma—The Red River, and the rivers of Burma—The Burmano-Chinese Railways—Hypotheses upon which they are based—Value of these hypotheses; various traces; their practicability—Projects of the Government of India—A land-route; treaty concluded with the Kachinese—A railroad.

THE conquest and commercial exploitation of Burma are not the final aim of British ambition. Burma is not merely, so to speak, a point of arrival; she is also a place of passage. Her boundaries are conterminous with those of India and China; she guards the approach to the former, and is apparently a means of access to the latter. In the conquest of Burma the British thought they had actually provided India with a new bulwark of defence and at the same time obtained

possession of one of the gates of China,[1] though the question still had to be faced: how to open it?

For the last fifty years and more, China has constituted one of the aims of the great European powers in the Far East. Doubtless not one of them at the present moment threatens the integrity of her territory; but they are one and all eager to have a share in her commerce, and to develop the immense natural resources which she allows to lie dormant. They therefore endeavour to obtain access to her territory for their engineers and manufacturers, as they have already succeeded in doing for their merchants in many of her ports. They are anxious to remodel her equipment and her methods, and to induce her to tread with them the paths of Western civilisation; and although China is self-satisfied and suspicious of foreigners—convinced as she very rightly is that contact with the West will prove fatal to her—their aim would assuredly have long ago been attained, had they

[1] "I may observe," wrote Yule in 1857, "that the missionaries in Yunnan receive their remittances by way of Amarapura." (Op. cit., p. 145). Since that time, however, remittances of money have undoubtedly been forwarded to the province of Si-Chuan, and probably also, to that of Yunnan by way of the Yang-tse-kiang. (Cf. *Seize années en Chine, lettres du P. Clerc.* 1887, Haton, Paris).

not during the last thirty years, abandoned the time-honoured policy which had previously been so successful in its results.

During the centuries which have preceded ours, and up to the year 1860 or thereabouts, the European Governments, whatever their enmities in Europe, had always acted in strict concert in their dealings with China. If any European nation encountered any difficulty, or claimed any reparation: her grievance or her claim became the claim or grievance of all the others. The *entente* was, indeed, easy to maintain at that time. Only four nations: France, Great Britain, Russia, and the United States had interests in China, and these interests were in each case of a different nature. After 1860, and more especially 1870, circumstances were altered. First Germany, then Italy, followed by other nations, appeared on the scene. They were all absorbed in their own material interests. All were now represented by their ambassadors at Pekin, instead of, as hitherto, by their consuls at the various ports. National animosities, the rivalry of individuals and in a still greater degree, industrial and commercial competition combined to sever the bond of union: ever since they have shown the Chinese, who suspected as much, that, so far as Europeans in the Far East are concerned, Europe is no longer a united country.

It was thought that the time was approaching when China would emerge from her long period of immobility, and by entering into competition with Western nations arm herself for this colossal duel. No apprehension was felt lest this duel should one day prove fatal to Europe. The mere prospect of all the railways, telegraphs, factories, and arsenals for which this gigantic customer would give orders turned the heads of all. Instead of sharing this unexpected windfall like good-natured thieves, each nation was anxious to reap the exclusive advantage herself, and became quite modest in her pretensions Germany, moved by ambition for her manufacturers, would not undertake anything which might set the Chinese against Herr Krupp. Great Britain, in her solicitude for her citizens settled in China: bankers, merchants, insurance agents, etc., silently waived her most legitimate demands. Whereas China remained equally hostile to all nationalities, and hated equally, under the generic term of Europeans, Englishmen, Russians, Frenchmen, or Italians; the Europeans themselves were divided and split up.

In politics there were petty treacheries; in business, sales at reduced rates, and sometimes contracts at a loss. The Chinese let them say and do what they pleased, and accepted what was beneficial to themselves,

but refrained from establishing a connection with any one, from entering into large enterprises, and from throwing open their country to Europeans or to European capital. At this game the nations all lost rapidly both their influence and respect. Even Russia once so feared, and who, as lately as 1881, had wrested important concessions from China, became aware that her influence was diminishing. And accurate observers are now doubtful as to which of the two nations inspires her rival with fear.

In this state of affairs, each nation consoles herself for her own losses by the losses of the other nations.

Certain Powers, however, actuated by more prudential motives, decided to have recourse to other means, which they believed would accelerate the desired solution. They sought out from among the countries bordering on China those whence relations might, without too great difficulty, be established with the province contiguous to the Empire. To this province they would obtain access; they would bring right up to its boundaries their railway and telegraph lines, their postal and transport services, their bazaars and markets; they would prove to it what the science, the laws, and the organisation of the Western barbarians could effect for the prosperity of peoples; they would enrich the

inhabitants of its nearest districts; they would win them over to the use of our customs and our inventions; they would make them —well pleased with their own benefits and satisfied—missionaries who would sing our praises to their compatriots; one after another they would proselytise the districts and provinces, and when in course of time the Empire, yielding to the force of example, decided on receiving our products and imitating our methods, they would be the first to gain admittance to her territory, and to "take orders." It was in this hope that the British established themselves in Burma, the French in Tongking and the Germans beat about Siam.

The frontier of Burma, like that of Tongking, is parallel for a long distance with that of the province of Yunnan. Tongking borders, further, in the north and north-west, on the two provinces of Quang-Si and Quang-Tung. Burma possesses several rivers which take their rise in China: the Irrawaddy, the Sittang, the Salwen; Tongking has, strictly speaking, but one river, the famous Red River.

This is not the place to speak of the Red River, or to compare it, as a means of gaining access to China, with those of Burma. Besides which, such a comparison would now be superfluous; the Red River has won. Steamers, which have been perfectly adapted to the re-

quirements, ascend the river as far as Laokai on the Chinese frontier, and all that remains for us to do is to afford every facility to navigation by improving, at a moderate cost, the channel of the river; and to commerce by repudiating—not by surreptitious and seemingly secret resolutions, but by a solemn and widely proclaimed law—the troublesome *régime* of customs' duties which bars the Tongking route to European transactions with Western China. The rivers of Burma, on the contrary, are, as I have already said, of infinitely greater length than those of Tongking, and offer insurmountable obstacles before reaching the Chinese frontier. The British themselves appear to have decisively condemned them, and are now, with a view to a nearer approach to, if not to an entry into China, engaged in making preliminary surveys of various lines of railway.

Amongst these surveys a marked distinction must be made between those which are either controlled, or even ordered, by the State, and those which aim at the very heart of the Empire, and are the outcome of purely private enterprise. Of the latter there has, indeed, been a perfect deluge. Long before the annexation of Upper Burma, explorers, engineers, former Indian officials, veritable commercial travellers in railways, started both in England and in the Far East

weekly recurring plans for some new line, which at a less cost than any of the others would invariably place China, and sometimes Siam also, literally within the grasp of the British. Their starting-point, would be either Rangoon, Maulmain, or Mandalay, and passing through Tali-fu or Semao, their terminus would be either at Bangkok, Canton, Yunnan-fu, Nanking or some other town of equal importance. Their object was to divert to Burma the traffic which had hitherto taken the route of the Mekong, the Red River, the Canton and especially the Yang-tse-kiang, rivers; and in the magnificent prospectuses which depicted their probable future, this object was invariably attained.

The most famous, perhaps, of these projected lines was that from Maulmain to Chung-king, on the Yang-tse-kiang. As this river has a very strong current which renders its ascent very tedious and expensive, people flattered—and still flatter—themselves that the European import-trade with the interior of China would desert it in favour of the railway starting from Burma and terminating at Chung-king. The descent of the river, on the contrary, though perilous, is rapid and comparatively inexpensive. It was therefore probable that all the provinces through which this river flows would continue, even after the railway had been opened, to use it as a

means of transport for their products to the east coast, and thence to Europe. This probable distribution of the traffic would still leave a very remunerative share to the Burmano-Chinese railway.

But it is doubtful whether the course of events would coincide exactly with the anticipations of its promoters; not to mention the enormous expense which would be incurred. The entire plan is based upon two hypotheses: the first, that China will sanction the construction of a railway on her territory; the second, that for a long time to come, at all events, she will not sanction the construction of more than one railway. But both these hypotheses are open to discussion.

That China may consent to the construction of a railway, is not impossible; and yet this may not occur in the near future. The example of the short line from Woosung to Shanghai, which was destroyed as soon as constructed, and transported to Formosa, where the pile of *matériel* is being swallowed up piecemeal by the sea—this recent example is not very encouraging. As a contrast to the above, I may instance the line, which is also a very short one, connecting Tientsin with the Kaiping coal-mines, and which has not hitherto been menaced; but in the latter instance it must be borne in mind that powerful personages, among others Li-Hung-

Chang, were interested in its construction, and are also interested in its maintenance. Now, as regards the proposed line, on the contrary, many people are opposed to its construction. Not to quote too long a list, I shall merely mention the Mandarins of the provinces through which the line would run, and further the British, or rather European residents of Eastern and South-Eastern China, particularly those of the communities of Shanghai, Hongkong, and all the open ports.

The Mandarins of these provinces, above all, dread the introduction of the system of communications in vogue in Europe—telegraphs and railways—which by facilitating transmission of orders, and the exercise of control, would deprive them of their authoritative independence. Accordingly, whilst refraining from any personal protest against projected public works, they have invariably endeavoured to obstruct even preliminary surveys by exciting popular prejudice,[1] and stirring up the people both against the projects, and the Europeans who advocated them.[2] The persecutions of the Christians

[1] Read the numberless accounts given by travellers of the Feng-chui (the anger of the wind and the water).

[2] And this is no mere idle talk. In 1889 the *Hongkong and Shanghai Bank* obtained a concession for a line running from Tientsin to Trong-Chow. The decree was signed, and the capital subscribed. Then such a formidable opposition arose that it was thought impossible

are actuated by similar feelings: in many cases the hatred of the Christian religion is less than that of Western civilisation.

As to the British communities in the Far East, seeing that the diversion of any portion of the traffic to Burma represents a loss for them, they cannot but be opposed to all these lines of railway. Of this there can be no manner of doubt, and it has been noticed that in no quarter have these various projects been criticised with greater acrimony and pertinacity than by the Anglo-Chinese newspapers circulating in these communities. The opposition of two such weighty elements is a primary and very potent cause of failure: but there is also another.

It is taken for granted that should China consent to the construction of a railway, the first one sanctioned by her would be pre-

to proceed with it. The Government consulted the provincial Governors as to the utility of railways. The most influential replied that they would undoubtedly prove advantageous, but that they must be constructed with the resources of the country, and without the intervention of foreigners. Under these circumstances railways were an impossibility. The Mandarins were aware of this, and desired it. The Central Government thought otherwise. On this occasion, indeed, the Viceroy of the two Quangs, the famous Cheng, who had most clearly enunciated this opinion, was removed, sent to the province of Hu-Pe, and ordered to construct, at his own expense, the line from Hankow to Lu-Ko-Tsiao, near Pekin.

cisely the Chung-king line, running through the provinces of Yunnan and Se-Chuen; and that when this railway was once completed she would not for a long time to come suffer other lines to be constructed. This is a gratuitous and irrational supposition. A country so vast in its proportions admits of several systems of railways: it could not possibly be tapped from one side only. Even assuming the hypotheses most favourable to the Burmano-Chinese railway, it is obvious that an onslaught on the main part of Central China must be anticipated from two or three other sides: on the east, the south-east, and the south. China, when once the first step was taken, would not refuse to take another. When she had sanctioned a railway partaking in some measure of an international character, she would not oppose, but rather encourage, lines which were really national ones.[1] And there would be no lack of capital. The Chinese, those successful and clever traders, would themselves subscribe all that was required; whilst the European and British colonies of Shanghai, Hongkong, and other open ports would make spontaneous offers, undeterred by any fear

[1] The first line of railway which the Chinese have thought of, is from Hankow, across the plains, to the sea.

of entering into competition with their fellow-countrymen in Burma.

Hence, for the present at all events, too great importance must not be attached to these projects of gigantic Burmano-Chinese railways, running from Rangoon or Maulmain to Canton or Chung-king.

On the other hand, the railways merely reaching, and not crossing over the Chinese frontier are quite another matter.

The first proposal of a railway to the Chinese frontier dates from thirty years back. In 1861 Sir Arthur Phayre, the first Chief Commissioner of Burma, recommended a preliminary survey of a line in the direction of Kiang-hung. In 1866 Lord Salisbury, then Viscount Cranborne, requested the Government of India which displayed no great concern about the matter, to have a survey made of a railway extending as far as the Chinese frontier. In 1869 the Duke of Argyll, and in 1874 Lord Salisbury for the second time insisted on this project. Finally, many others, travellers or officials, had originated various more or less elaborate, and practical plans. It was not, however, until 1882 that, at the instance of the explorer Colquhoun, a survey—although a summary one—was made of the country in order to determine whether it would be possible to construct a railway connecting Burma and

China. Since 1882 this idea has never been relinquished;[1] but the proposed lines of route have varied considerably.

I shall proceed to indicate the lines of route which have found most favour, regardless of their chronological order. Nearly all of them, in view of the eventualities to which I have referred, admit of two terminal points: one on the Chinese frontier or in its immediate vicinity; the other, on Chinese territory, at a greater or less distance from the Burmese frontier.

An earlier trace starts from Mandalay, ascends the Irrawaddy as far as Bhamo and thence taking a bend to the north-east crosses the Chinese frontier, and terminates at Momein. From Momein it extends in a north-easterly direction to Tali-fu, or else eastward to Yung-chang, and thence on to Yunnan-fu. This trace which has long been regarded with favour, and a portion of which will probably be adopted later, has at present been entirely abandoned. Several travellers, among whom may be specially mentioned those of the Grosvenor mission, and Mr. Colquhoun, have explored the country which it traverses, and consider it impracticable. The

[1] See the numerous letters of encouragement addressed by British Chambers of Commerce to the engineers and the Government; especially the letter of the Blackburn Chamber of Commerce, of the 8th February, 1892.

following is what Mr. Colborne Baber, Interpreter and Secretary to the British Embassy at Pekin, and a member of the Grosvenor mission, says concerning it: "It seems chimerical to suppose that this route could be rendered practicable for wheel-traffic. The valleys or, rather, the chasms of the Salwen and the Mekong, not to mention other obstacles, offer difficulties which will undoubtedly prove insurmountable for a long time to come. By cutting half-a-dozen tunnels like that of Mont Cenis, by constructing a few bridges like that over the Menai Straits, the route from Burma to Yunnan-fu might doubtless be much improved." We may add that the line would traverse mountainous regions which are barren and uninhabited.

A second trace starts from Hlaindet on the line which runs from Rangoon to Mandalay, descends in a south-easterly direction to Mone, crosses the Salwen at Tacaw Ferry, and passes through Kiang-tung and Kiang-hung. Kiang-hung is but a short distance from the Chinese village of Semao. This trace passes through an exceedingly mountainous country. Between Hlaindet and Mone, there are no less than four defiles, one of which is 4,900 feet above sea-level. Beyond Mone three chains of mountains are crossed, then a descent is made to Tacaw Ferry

(870 feet above sea-level) where the Salwen is 800 feet wide. Between Tacaw Ferry and Kiang-tung there are four more mountain-chains, varying in altitude from 4,000 to 6,500 feet, and, lastly, from Kiang-tung to Kiang-hung, a continuous incline with a total fall of 4,000 feet.

The enormous difficulties which these traces would offer, led Messrs. Colquhoun and Hallett to seek another route across a country with fewer obstacles. Their projected line starts from Maulmain, the second port of Burma, on the Gulf of Martaban, not far from the mouth of the Salwen, and thence passes successively Myawaddy, Rahaing on the Mei-Ping, Lakon, and Kiang-sen on the Mekong. On leaving Kiang-sen it follows the course of the river at a short distance from it, and reaches Kiang-hung, the terminus of the preceding route. This proposal, which is still favourably regarded, has the advantage of being shorter than the others, and of traversing a line of country with somewhat less steep inclines. The altitude of Rahaing is 377 feet; that of Lakon, 763; of Kiang-sen, 1,097; and, lastly, of Kiang-hung, about 2,000 feet. These advantages are counterbalanced by the inconvenience arising from the fact that none of the already existing lines are made use of, and that a considerable length of the line en-

croaches upon Siamese territory. In the latter respect it is inferior to the other routes which traverse exclusively Burmese territory.

From this point of view it comprises four sections; two on Burmese, and two on Siamese territory, in the following succession: Maulmain to Myawaddy, Burmese territory; Myawaddy to Rahaing, Siamese territory; Rahaing to Kiang-sen, Siamese territory; Kiang-sen to the Chinese frontier, Burmese territory. The two Burmese, or rather British sections would measure: from Maulmain to Myawaddy, 80 miles; from Kiang-sen to the Chinese frontier, 240 miles; the two Siamese sections would measure: from Myawaddy to Rahaing, 88 miles; from Rahaing to Kiang-sen, 250; that is, a total of 320 miles for the British, and 338 for the Siamese sections. The probable cost would amount, for the British sections, to £2,500,000; for the Siamese sections, to £2,200,000, making a total, in round numbers, of £5,000,000.

This is a very high figure, and there is nothing to prove that it would not be exceeded. Mr. Holt Hallett has been unable to devote more than a very brief study to the matter; more accurate calculations will probably prove that this estimate would be exceeded by one-third to one-half, or perhaps still more. Even assuming its accuracy, this enormous

sum constitutes a new and very serious obstacle to a proposal which is otherwise well-planned. It is, indeed, questionable whether the Siamese would consent to construct, or merely to subsidise a line which would be of infinitely less use to them than to the British. 'Tis true, they are inclined to adopt European inventions; but in the very complete list of their own proposed railways recently compiled by Captain Jones, British Consul-General at Bangkok, this one does not figure.[1]

I may add that the British public has itself displayed considerable disapproval of a line which would not run entirely through British territory; consequently Mr. Holt Hallett recently found himself obliged to modify his trace, and to take his projected line of railway through Burma and the Shan States.

However, the Government of India has not thought fit to adopt the trace of Messrs. Colquhoun and Hallett; but has fallen back upon an already existing roadway which has long been in use, and is considering a railway which would traverse Burmese territory throughout, and would utilise existing lines for part of its length.

[1] See this list, which is given almost *in extenso* in the interesting and accurate *brochure* by Captain Devrez, *Les Grandes Voies commerciales du Tonkin,* Paris, Lavauzelle, 1891.

The route in question is that leading from Bhamo to Tali-fu. It is called the "ambassadors' road," being that which the Burmese ambassadors were accustomed to take when they went to China to pay tribute; it had also for a long period been the route of commerce. This has, however, no longer been the case for several years past: trade was dull, and the merchants, who by reason of their diminished number were less capable of resistance, were systematically plundered by a robber-tribe called the Katchinese, and preferred to give up their trading expeditions altogether. This state of affairs roused the British to action, and they had recourse to an expedient which they had already adopted with success elsewhere. Plunder is, indeed, a customary occupation of the Katchinese. Whether it be a merchant-traveller, or a peasant-agriculturist, all are fish that come to their net. They had, as we have seen, taken to raiding the peaceable inhabitants of the valleys at the foot of their mountains, and the Government of India only succeeded in restoring peace by sending Captain Raikes to negotiate with their chiefs. A second mission was sent to reopen the Yunnan route to traders. At the beginning of 1890 the Katchinese, after having for some time been subjected to considerable pressure, entered into an agreement to de-

sist from molesting the traders, to leave the road open to them, and even to keep it in good repair. In return, the British Government undertook to levy a fixed contribution on the merchants, and to distribute the amount thus obtained annually amongst the associated chiefs. Thanks to this singular agreement, which is quite in accordance with the customs of the country, the route has been re-opened to trade, and business relations between China and Burma are re-established.

But this road is, as may be imagined, a somewhat primitive means of communication, and one which can give but little impetus to trade. Consequently, the Government contemplates constructing a line of railway at a more or less distant date. This line, which is, however, by no means a novel idea, having been adversely criticised by Mr. Colquhoun himself as far back as 1884, would start from Mandalay, and make for Theebaw; thence ascending the valley of the Myitngè it would proceed to Theinnee, and reach the Salwen at Kunlon Ferry. The Salwen constitutes a limit beyond which the British Government for many reasons does not as yet wish to risk its capital. Provisionally, then, the line would stop at this point. When the day comes on which an entry into China can be effected, the Salwen would be crossed, the line be continued upwards

along the course of the river Nanting as far as Sunnig-fu (100° long., 24°40′ lat.) and thence to Yunnan-fu.

This line, according to the present plan, that is, extending from Mandalay to Kunlon Ferry, would have a length of from 260 to 265 miles, and would cost about 30 millions of rupees. It is considered practicable. Both engineers and non-professional men are of this opinion. Mr. William Sheriff, who was commissioned by the Rangoon Chamber of Commerce to report on the project, formally declared at a meeting of the Society of Arts of that town, that he had met with no serious obstacle. According to him there would be no greater incline than 1 in 40. Lord Lamington, who has lately travelled in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, holds the same view. Yet even the official plans indicate slopes of 4,000 feet, and mention as a serious obstacle a famous gorge named Gokteck or Gotkeik. The department of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce which deals with Chinese and Indian affairs declares that "the difficulties connected with the construction of this railway are enormous." Lastly, Mr. Colquhoun in his comparison of possible traces refers to the opinion of Doctor William, author of "Through Burma to Western China," which is by no means reassuring. "I hold the passes (of the Shan plateaux)," he

says, "to be impracticable either for a railway or a tramway. In 1861, when crossing the mountains whence the road to Theinnee debouches, I had to pass along footpaths situated at an altitude of 5,000 feet above the river-level. I have ascended and redescended the sides of the mountain in this neighbourhood by four different routes: every one of them was precipitous, and not only impracticable at the present moment, but—as far as can be judged without technical experience—impossible to render practicable for any description of railway or tramway, without an expenditure which would by far exceed what could be reasonably devoted to the attainment of this object." Be this as it may, the Government of India has had a preliminary survey made of this trace, and its engineers have declared it to be practicable. It has not, however, as yet sanctioned the line, nor ordered the works to be commenced.

Such are the principal lines which have attracted the attention of the Government of India or of capitalists.

The realisation of the majority of them can scarcely be said to be as yet within measurable distance.[1]

[1] I may add that the majority of the lines which aim at penetrating into China pass through Semao. If we were so minded, we could be at Semao before anybody else. Consult the map of China and Anam.

CHAPTER XV

FINANCIAL ORGANISATION.

The principles of financial organisation—India and Great Britain; Tonking and France—The Comparative independence of India—Its consequences—Influence on politics, and on commerce—Trade of Burma—Share accruing to Great Britain—Revenue.

PRELIMINARY surveys and the planning of new lines of railway are easy matters compared with the much harder task of finding the money for their execution; and the British in Upper Burma have from the very commencement been beset by financial difficulties, as the French have also been in Tongking. The two countries do not, however, admit of a very exact comparison. They so far resemble one another that neither has a revenue sufficient to cover an expenditure which in both cases is cut down to as low a figure as possible, and that Tongking, should it require supplementary resources, applies to the

French Government, whilst Burma in a similar case applies to the Government of India.

I have already had occasion to point out, but it will bear repetition, that India is not one of the ordinary class of colonies, but a Viceroyalty. India is an organism independent of the mother country; she has a separate existence and, though subject to the control of the Home Government, enjoys perfect liberty in the conduct of her interior and exterior policy. Her independence is subject to the condition that she hamper neither the policy, nor—what might probably be more to be apprehended—the finances of Great Britain. Like all rich and organised countries, India possesses two sources of supply: taxes and loans. Within the limits of her resources, and provided she makes no improper use of either, she is free to fix the amount of her expenditure pretty much as she pleases. And the consequences thereof to her are important: I shall mention one only.

In an ordinary colony there is what one might term a gulf fixed between the conception and realisation of a plan. Let us suppose that it is desired to construct a network of railways in Tonking. The Governor requests the Director of Public Works to draw up a plan. This plan is forwarded to the Under Secretary of State in Paris, and

he has it examined in his offices. But his subordinates though competent to criticise matters of a political, commercial or financial nature, are not competent critics of the science of engineering. Consequently, this portion of the project is referred to the Superior Council of the Civil Engineering Department, or possibly to a Special Commission, which will be sure to introduce amendment. In due course it is returned to the local Board for "supplementary study." Meanwhile, however, the opportunity has slipped away; the responsible author of the original plan has been replaced by a new engineer who regards matters from a different stand-point to that of his predecessor, the Council, or the Commission; he prepares a plan which, after a long interval, will perhaps go through a similar course of scrutiny. Let us suppose that at length a decision is arrived at: there then remains the question of money. In the colonies, as elsewhere, railways are not, as a rule, constructed with budget-surpluses, but by loans contracted for the purpose, or subsidies granted by the Home Government. In the latter case the matter comes before Parliament, which in its turn scrutinises a project which the Civil Service has already subjected to a twofold scrutiny, and so the chapter of adventures of this unfortunate scheme begins afresh. It is

lucky indeed if the discussion turns, not upon the trace, but the principle of the railway. Thus, unless the Governor is a man whose opinion carries weight, the Secretary of State for the Colonies firm, and the Parliamentary Commission favourably disposed to the project, the debate thereon will be frequently adjourned, and Tongking will remain without its railway.

India, on the contrary, with her almost autonomous Civil Service, her independent exchequer, her well-nigh all-powerful Government, has scarcely any other impediments to contend with than those attributable to her own caution, and it may be said without exaggeration that this caution has at times retarded her action to a greater extent than the Home Government would have wished. If it is a question of digging a canal, or of constructing a railway: the Government of India can proceed with the survey and even with the preliminary works, well-assured that it will have no difficulty in obtaining sanction to a well-devised scheme. We were able to instance a case in point in the course of the present essay, viz., that of the railway from Toungoo to Mandalay.

Now the Home Government has its reasons for being so lenient. They are not hard to guess.

One is, that the Government of India,

being in a position to study the various problems on the spot, and having at its disposal first-rate political and technical advisers, inspires the Home Government in every case, if not with absolute confidence, with as much and even more confidence, than any other consultative body which it could assemble in England. The other reason, perhaps a less weighty, but, it must be confessed, a more decisive one, is that the Government of India, when applying for its sanction, does not usually make any appeal for pecuniary aid, which obviates the necessity of laying the matter before Parliament. The Cabinet is therefore at liberty to judge the project on its own intrinsic merits, and without reference to any difficulties which might thereby be created for its home policy.

This good understanding between the two Governments, which is also manifested in other matters besides Public Works, gives the policy of India wonderful security and elasticity. India, being thus, by virtue of her financial autonomy, mistress of her actions, occupies an exalted position, and owes her greatness partly to her skill in taking advantage of opportunities which others have let slip, and partly to the ability to do what has to be done at the right moment. Therefore, all Frenchmen who have studied

her history cannot but envy her favourable position, and long for the time when our Indo-Chinese possessions will be in a similar state of semi-independence in regard to the Home Government, which is a necessary condition for their future greatness. But a similar position requires, in the first instance, prosperous or, at all events, elastic finances: it is for this reason that the British Government and the Government of India have, as far as their policy permitted it, taken such pains in all the provinces of India, and particularly in Burma, to provide themselves with the means of improving local resources.

I cannot enter into details respecting the revenue. I will merely say a word as to its nature.

Commerce is—in the earlier period of colonisation—the source of all wealth: consequently commerce will be regarded with favour; it will be allowed special facilities and entire freedom of action. By so doing, the colonists will amass wealth, and the receipts of the Treasury will be augmented. But, however great the need of funds, the receipts must not be augmented at all hazards. An over-exacting Treasury makes untractable rate-payers. The demands made must be moderate, and should this liberality in conjunction with an impoverished exchequer

lead to a deficit, it must be borne with resignation: the present is but the seed-time; the harvest when it comes, will repay all the trouble, and all the sacrifices.

This method which is so simple, so logical, and yet so rarely adopted, has, under British auspices, quite equalled expectations.

The trade of Burma, liberally equipped, affords evidence of progressive increase. In 1886-1887, just after the annexation and while the insurrection was yet at its height, it amounted to £13,120,000; it increased in 1887-1888 to £15,320,000; in 1888-1889, to £14,040,000; in 1889-1890, to £15,760,000; and in 1890-1891, to £17,960,000. That is, not counting the exceptional year 1886-1887, an increase of 14 per cent in three years. And our (French) consul at Rangoon, M. Pilinsky, removes all doubt as to the cause of this increase: "Business with Upper Burma," he says, "was almost at a standstill .... But since 1887 the country has been gradually pacified; the peasants, a large proportion of whom had abandoned their villages, returned to them, and devoted themselves to agriculture; and business, which had sustained a momentary check, was resumed with increased activity."

The figures which I have just quoted represent the entire export-trade of Burma,

i. e., the exports to Great Britain as well as those to other countries. It is a curious fact, and contrary to the generally received opinion, that the share of Great Britain in this trade is not a very large one. The imports from Burma into Great Britain were in 1886-1887 £2,120,000; in 1887-1888, £1,560,000; in 1888-1889, £1,400,000; and in 1889-1890, £2,280,000. The exports from Great Britain to Burma were in 1886-1887, £1,400,000; 1887-1888, £2,320.000; in 1888-1889, £2,080,000; and, lastly, in 1889-1890, £1,880,000; this gives a total of £3,480,000 for 1886-1887 out of £13,120,000; and for 1889-1890, of £4,160,000 out of £14,040,000. The proportion is not favourable to Great Britain. In spite of this, however, there is no question of applying to Burma a so-called protective tariff, which would ruin that country without adding to the wealth of the mother country.

In the revenue returns, as in those of commerce, there is also evidence of progress. In 1886-1887 the revenue derived from Upper Burma alone amounted to Rs.2,224,980; this amount rose in 1887-1888 to Rs. 5,016,360; in 1888-1889, to Rs.7,345,430; and in 1889-1890, to Rs.10,103,150. This progressive increase is a good omen; it does not, however, suffice to balance the budget. Since 1886 the annual deficit has been

from 8 to 12 millions of rupees.[1] This state of affairs, however, occasions no anxiety to the Government of India, nor does the Imperial Parliament demand the evacuation of the country: they are both aware that a young colony does not pay its expenses; successive Viceroys, from Lord Dalhousie in 1852, have foreseen the deficit, and, bearing in mind the present financial position of Lower Burma as contrasted with former days, they have been content to quietly await the course of events.

[1] No great reliance can be placed on any of these figures. The statistics given in English, and Indian official records do not correspond.

CHAPTER XVI.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS.

Results of British Administration—Lessons which the French may learn therefrom—The method, and its expedients—A rational plan: races; laws; officials; public safety; material and intellectual equipment—Colonisation.

A flourishing trade; finances based upon an admirable system, but nevertheless still inadequate to the country's requirements and likely to remain so for several years to come; the administrative machinery erected on the solid foundation of good laws, and good officials, but yet occasionally thrown out of gear by frictions, and liable to jerky action; lastly, pacification and security increasing steadily day by day, but still disturbed from time to time by rude awakenings, and even successful outbreaks of the spirit of revolt: such is, briefly stated, the balance-sheet of British occupation in Burma at the end of six years.

I fear it will appear rather a poor one.

Its apparent mediocrity will cause a certain amount of exultation among those whose slumbers are disturbed by the thought of Burma, and will evoke a smile of pity from others, who cannot brook the idea of taking a lesson from the British school. The actual disproportion between these results and the means employed for their attainment will create some misgivings in the minds of those who had augured marvellous results from British sagacity and skill.

The latter circumstance seems to me the worst of all.

There is a certain class of novel-readers to whom a logical sequence of events is the supreme desideratum. They wish the characters presented in the volume to remain throughout rigidly congealed in the form which they assumed at the commencement. If at the commencement they are virtuous, virtuous they must remain to the end; they will not tolerate even a momentary relaxation of their uncompromising virtue. In like manner they cannot suffer clever people to make a mistake or prudent people to commit an imprudence. And if by a mishap excellent means should fail in bringing about the desired effect they condemn them thenceforth as useless.

Novel-readers of this class are unfortunately also to be met with in politics.

But such is not life. Human beings and events do not display unvarying sameness or automatic precision; at any moment circumstances may occur which will upset the best laid plans. Though the British, notwithstanding their persistent efforts to pacify Burma, and to develop its resources by Public Works and other means, have after six years not completed the pacification or ensured a steady development of the country's resources, or established a perfect system of administration, this fact need not disconcert us, nor shatter our faith in knowledge and prudence. The mediocrity of the results is no evidence against the method.

But further. The supposition is allowed that with a less methodical procedure results apparently more brilliant might have been attained. But method is conscientious: it prescribes expedients, and scorns appearances. It connects the future with the present; it clears and levels the ground-plot before building upon it; in building the house it begins with the cellars, and not with the upper stories. This is slow, and costly; but it is durable. To the prejudiced eye the British in Burma may not appear much more advanced, than we ourselves are in Tonking. They are, however, infinitely more so. Their future prospects are assured.

There is not a doubt of it, to my mind.

Accordingly, now that I am on the point of concluding, I have no hesitation in saying: let us adapt the institutions of Burma to Tonking.

Let us adapt, but not adopt them bodily. For the two situations have nothing indentical, nor even wholly comparable: there is no resemblance between them and us, Tongking and Burma, our Mandarins and their native officials, the Burmese and the Tonkinese, nor even between their Chinese and ours. The differences are assuredly obvious, and to many persons they, and they only, will be apparent. And yet several similarities obtrude themselves, and the only danger is, lest too many should be discovered. Let us, then, not copy, but adapt.

As I stated at the commencement of this work, the experience of the British in Burma admits of our evolving certain rules; which I shall now proceed to do.

These rules applied to Tonking demand the fulfilment of the following conditions:

1.—A knowledge should be acquired of the peoples whose destiny we have taken in hand. These peoples, though inhabiting one and the same country, belong to different races and families. Not to mention numberless tribes, the offspring of untraceable intermarriages, the Cambodians are one race, the Anamites, another; the inhabitants of Cochin

China are akin to those of Anam; it is uncertain whether or no the Tonkinese form a distinct race. On this point opinions differ: M. Harmand, M. Aymonnier, M. Sylvestre, the Governor-General, M. de Lannessan, Mgr. Puginier, all have (or had) their various opinions: the inhabitants of Anam, and Tongking must be studied from a historical, an ethnological, and a political point of view; and it must be ascertained beyond a shadow of doubt whether they are one and the same nation, or whether their origin, their struggles, and their institutions do not render them two distinct and possibly even antagonistic nations.

2.—This question settled; the next matter of importance is, to give these peoples laws: by which I mean laws adapted to their requirements. Now, this is what the laws now in force in our Indo-Chinese possessions are not. Their own native laws do not cover sufficient ground now that they are connected with us, and our French laws are still too advanced for them. They require laws which are more comprehensive than their own and certainly less complicated than ours. Neither the Anamite code—the collection and translation of which we owe to the prolific era of the Admiral-Governors of Cochin China,— nor the *Code Napoléon* can —applied separately—afford satisfaction or be

adapted to their requirements: they want laws specially made for them, laws modelled in a great measure on their own native laws, but amplified, where necessary, in accordance with the principles, but not the provisions, of our Western legal codes.

However, the time for codifying these laws has not yet arrived. This is a colossal task, and one requiring a multiplicity of precautions, and a vast amount of talent. In India the task was entrusted to such men as Lord Macaulay, and Sir Henry Summer Maine, who spent several years in merely collecting the materials. I am not aware whether we have such men at our disposal. In any case, I believe we do not yet possess such materials. Let us, then, confine ourselves for the present to restoring to the Anamites a portion of the laws which we have imprudently altered; and continuing the work of the La Grandières, the Luros, etc., let us collect for future use the materials for a code of native laws, which shall be worthy of a great nation.

3.—But laws are not everything. Let us have officials and judges who know how to administer them. Let the mother country retain, or let us even restore to her, the executive and judicial officers whom she so lavishly bestows upon her colonies. Indo-China (like India) requires tried and well-

trained officials. For a brief period she possessed such; let us renew the tradition. Let us institute competitive examinations such as I have described—this would be the more liberal plan,—or else keep up our Colonial College, which would be less complicated. But let us improve the latter. Let us transform it from a Colonial, into an Indo-Chinese school. Let us not throw it open to all comers, but only to those who have successfully passed a strict and honest competitive examination, certifying their intellectual and moral worth. Let us organise a practical course of study for a period of two years under efficient teachers; let us guarantee the successful candidates honourable openings, and an assured career; lastly, let us complete their education in the country of their destination, *paying* them during this stage of their career; and ten years hence we shall have as many officials as we require, and who may be compared to the most distinguished of Indian civilians.

4.—Having made provision for justice and administration, the next requisite is security: both within and without.

On our Chinese frontier, a few forts might be placed at points of strategical importance, and a few battalions might be posted judiciously: above all, our transactions and relations should be good. Let us concern our-

selves less with Pekin, and more with the provinces bordering on our possessions. We know so little of the mandarins, and indeed misjudge them. A little respect—which many of them deserve—would conciliate them. Opportune gifts, proportioned to their rank, presented to the Viceroys of the two Quangs and Yunnan, the Governors and the "Taotai" would have a decisive effect. They would keep an eye on their frontiers, and would, so to say, *filter* the emigrants. If, in addition to this, we made an alteration in the poll-tax, which in its present form humiliates them, we should have, I do not say all at once, but in four or five years' time, the best Chinamen in the world. Countries in the Far-East, as a rule, get the class of Chinaman they deserve.

As regards Anam, a rational use must be made of the political and military resources of the country. The protectorate must be restored; the king treated with respect, which would invest him with a prestige to be used in our service; the people influenced through the medium of the Mandarins; not of the Princes or the Chiefs of powerful clans who would be incapable of rallying, without *arrière-pensée*, round an upright and economical administration,—but the minor Mandarins, humble *literati*, whose conduct

we could control by our agents, and to whose influence that of the leading men would serve as an equipoise.

So much for political matters. Military matters are capable of an equally easy solution. A native militia must be constituted, and also a civil and military police force; these forces may, without any apprehension, be officered, except in the higher ranks, by native chiefs. In addition to the militia, two standing armies,—numerically small, but quite distinct—would be required; one of French troops; the other of native troops which must have strong *cadres*, and be commanded by Frenchmen. The native troops to be precisely similar to the native Indian army, that is to say, engaged for service in Tongking only, with *cadres* whose whole career would be made there. The French troops, still less numerous, to be recruited on advantageous terms from among hardy, grown-up men, and judiciously posted at strategic points in healthy localities. There they would be allowed to remain, not inactive, but at peace, ever ready for action, but rarely made use of, and surrounded with comfort, and prestige; they would be reserved for supreme contingencies; no display would be made of them, they would be kept as much as possible out of sight, like a mysterious "scarecrow" and, to use an English

expression, like splendid and terrible "animals of war."

Arrangements such as these will make us feared by the natives; but that is not enough; we must make ourselves known and appreciated, I do not venture to say, liked.

5.—As a means to this end, let us add to whatever benefits they already derive from Eastern civilisation those which our Western civilisation affords: education; equipment; wealth.

A.—*Education*, especially with peoples who venerate science, and respect the learned, is an admirable means of spreading influence. But one must know how to avail one's-self of it. The British have scarcely given it a trial in Burma. Their experiments in India have not been particularly successful, and have served to give colour to the opinion, which has some notable supporters, that to educate the natives is to train up leaders for your enemies. This opinion is based upon false appearances.

The British made a mistake in India. True to their traditional policy, they proposed to rely on a native *élite* for the government of the people. With this object in view, they went to great expense in order to provide this *élite* with tuition in the higher branches of knowledge, and for a long period neglected elementary education. Thanks to this proce-

dure the prize-men of their universities were regarded by their compatriots, who were systematically kept in a state of ignorance, as demi-gods, and thus acquired a prestige which might have become a source of danger. To remedy this state of affairs, the British are now everywhere introducing elementary education. And this already has a salutary effect.

There is the solution! Let us establish numerous schools in Tongking, and afford the people free access to them. Let the education imparted be—another fault to be avoided—the complement of the Anamite education, and not a rival system. Let it not be our aim to deprive the Chinese of the means whereby they may keep in touch with the Chinese world. Let us not shut them out from this world, in inducting them into ours. Let us not even offer them a choice between the two systems; let us give them both in conjunction.

B.—*Equipment*; an equipment of the most improved type, which shall justify our intervention,— that is, in fact, what these *virtuosi* and men of action require. A material, as well as an intellectual outfit. They are quite capable of availing themselves of it: just look at the success of our *messageries maritimes*, and *messageries fluviales!* Well-managed ports, well-planned and well-maintained canals, roads,

and railways, a good postal and telegraph service,—these are the best agents of rule, the best means of enrichment.

C.—The *prosperity* of every young colony, and especially of this one, which is a commercial route, depends on commerce. Let us afford to commerce a maximum of freedom. We have introduced our general tariff into Indo-China and while no one benefits therefrom, the natives and colonists are great losers thereby: let us abolish it—not surreptitiously, but openly, publicly, solemnly. Let us proclaim its abolition to all the world. Let the world, our adversaries, who use it as a weapon against us, be unable either to ignore its abolition, or to let it be ignored. Let the colonists, the natives, the Chinese know that for the future trade is free, and that, at length, a fortune may be made in French Indo-China.

6.—And let us people this Indo-China with good colonists, men of enterprise and discretion. Let us invite thither the Chinaman, and the Frenchman; not the poor, but the rich, the capitalist: they will employ the others later on. Let us invite, let us attract them. Let us offer them advantages, privileges, monopolies. This is my prayer, the prayer of an economist and a liberal. Let us create at Tongking privileged Companies; not one only, but several; not a single

great Company, but small and medium-sized Companies which will compete with one another. We have tracts of land in the east, the north and the north-west which under the existing *régime*, will remain wastes for a century to come: let us people them. French capitalists, Chinese foremen, native labourers: there you have a triple alliance which will bear abundant fruit.

And when we have accomplished all this, and have pursued this policy (which is surely a very simple one) for the space of ten years without allowing ourselves to be disheartened by any rebuffs, we shall no longer require to take a lesson from anybody.

For, I confess that when I compare what the British, backed by the infinite resources of India, have accomplished in Burmah with the results which we Frenchmen with our wretched means have attained in Tongking, I cannot refrain from admiring our capacity for colonisation.

In point of courage, devotion, ingenuity, heartiness, or even pertinacity and industry we need envy no one. There is one thing in which we are defective: though pre-eminently disposed to economy, we are wanting in foresight. This the British possess in a superlative degree. For half a century their motto has been "get ready," while ours has been, and still is "get clear." Sometimes

we succeed in doing so; at others, we become more deeply involved. And when at length our plight is desperate, we appeal to some more talented person, and entreat him to get us out of our dilemma. With good laws judiciously enforced, ordinary well-trained officials would have sufficed for the task: we, however, squander upon it the energies of our men of genius. This is a wasteful procedure which no well-ordered state can tolerate: let us be thrifty, but provident withal.

THE END

E. J. Brill, Printer, Leyden.


Rahaing
Ban-pao
Tavoy
Kanbo
Pahtia
Isthmus
of
Kra.

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